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# **Conflict and Integration in the Federal Bureaucracy**

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Studies of  
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Final Technical Report

CONFLICT AND INTEGRATION  
IN THE  
FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY

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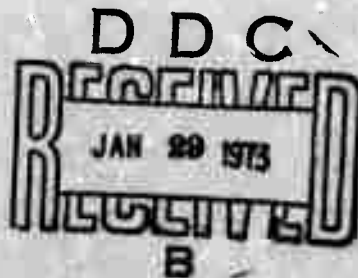
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<p>This report is addressed to those who want to improve the effectiveness of the federal bureaucracy, and to students of conflict resolution. It reports on seven innovative efforts of State Department and other federal officials to constructively manage the conflict among foreign affairs and urban agencies. The report contains theoretical analyses of the forces toward conflict and integration, interagency interaction processes, and conflict resolution interventions available to third parties. While the specific products of these efforts were diverse in character--planning documents, new organizational units--and while the primary goals were achieved in various degrees of success and failure, the efforts produced many of the same secondary outcomes, including mutual education, interpersonal bonds across agency boundaries, and learnings and skills. These products left the community somewhat more integrated in a general sense, thereby enhancing its capacities for undertaking the next interagency efforts. The similarities lead to several conclusions:</p> <p>1. Two-dimensional conceptualization of interagency relationship: Conflict and integration are frequently used to define the relevant spectrum along which the relationship is evaluated. The achievement of integration, in this</p> <p>(Continued on attached sheet)</p>			

(Abstract, continued)

setting at least, must be conceptualized as two-dimensional--movement along two dimensions. The study of agencies underscores the usefulness of viewing avoidance-engagement and conflict-cooperation as two separate dimensions. Integration then is explicitly viewed as moving away from either or both of the conflictful or avoidance modalities and toward collaborative engagement.

Consistent with this conceptual development were our empirical observations that integrative initiatives frequently floundered because of avoidance tendencies and integrative efforts were often successful because they were designed to overcome these tendencies.

2. Feedback loops--implicitly a bootstrap strategy of integrating the bureaucratic communities: The feedback effect of integrative efforts is a significant phenomenon. Even where the primary goal of a particular integrative effort was not achieved in any significant degree, the inter-agency project, exercise, or council frequently produced changes in skills, knowledge, relationships, attitudes, and values that would facilitate future integrative initiatives. Thus, at the conceptual level, this confirmed the value of a systems-like model with feedback loops; and at the practical level, this indicated that bureaucrats should explicitly evaluate interagency efforts in these terms as well as in terms of their primary goals.

3. Behavioral skill--an essential ingredient in the integrative process: Despite the almost pervasive effect of many constraints in the interagency environment, many individuals were able to fashion effective strategies for integrative development. Frequently their effectiveness was explicable in terms of the way they handled joint decision making and agency identification processes and/or the way they played third party roles in the management of conflict.

4. Structural modification--urgently needed: The feedback effect sometimes includes procedural or structural adjustments as well as attitude changes. This is a necessary outcome because a more favorable bureaucratic climate and greater behavioral skills can make only modest progress unless there are some accompanying structural changes. Such changes would include alterations in such things as the authority of lead agencies, and regional boundaries for urban affairs agencies.

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PART I

1. a

## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The coordinated efforts of many federal agencies are required to solve the social problems which confront the United States on the domestic scene and in our foreign environment. The problems to which the interagency programs address themselves are enormously difficult to solve. The problems of economically underdeveloped and/or politically unstable countries are not really resolved even with large-scale assistance efforts on the part of the U.S. Domestic urban problems sometimes appear equally defiant of solution. This volume is an attack on one of the three bottleneck factors which limit our progress toward solutions.

The first is a theoretical bottleneck: we just don't have adequate models of the processes of nation building or of urban improvement-- models that indicate the proper priorities for education, health, transportation, employment, housing, social services, order, justice, political aptitudes, etc. We don't know what are causes and what are effects in the complex social processes we want to change, nor what are the key variables in unfreezing customs, habits, attitudes, expectations, and aspirations. What is worse, the government officials who play instrumental roles are not sufficiently accustomed to thinking in these broader terms.

The second factor is a resource bottleneck: the funds required to reverse the unfavorable trends in illiteracy, hunger, and alienation in Latin America, for example, would test the financial capability of the U.S. Similarly, the allocation of funds required to achieve a politically and morally acceptable rate of progress in curing the ills of our own cities and rural slums has no domestic precedent.

Third, we have an organizational bottleneck: the federal government manages both foreign affairs and its urban programs with extraordinarily inefficient and ineffective instruments. Typically the U.S. mission is comprised of a dozen or more separate missions representing as many different U.S. agencies, each with its own legislative mandate, funds authorization, and personnel career lines. The ambassador, via his country team, usually provides only loose supervision of the aggregate mission. While a presidential directive has formally legitimated overall supervision by the ambassador, this authority is only meaningful to the extent that it is backed up by the interagency councils in Washington or by the White House; and in this regard, the experience of most ambassadors has been discouraging. Thus, in many respects, relatively little integration of U.S. foreign affairs is achieved. This is true in the policy thrusts of the many agencies comprising a given overseas mission, in the implementation

of their respective programs, and in their various actual contacts with host country officials.

It is the organizational bottleneck which is the dominant focus of this study. The severe organizational constraints with which the federal bureaucracy attempts to accomplish its many missions have been a matter of explicit concern for the past several presidents. For example, the Johnson Administration sought to strengthen the leadership role of the State Department in foreign affairs at various levels of the Washington bureaucracy. Each of the regional Assistant Secretaries of State chairs an Interdepartmental Regional Group; and the Under Secretary of State chairs a Senior Interdepartmental Group. These Washington mechanisms have been less effective at their own levels than the country team has been in the overseas mission. At the cabinet level there have been earlier, more ambitious and more effective efforts to coordinate foreign affairs.<sup>1</sup> The National Security Council, created by the National Security Act of 1947, has been regarded by different presidents in different ways, but usually has been utilized in a way that helped fill the need to formulate and correlate national policy in foreign affairs.<sup>2</sup>

These on-going interagency groups with their lead role assignments are treated either focally or as background in Chapters 3-5. These represent one of several significant approaches which have been used or seriously contemplated in integrating foreign affairs. A second approach involves organizational assimilation or merger. For example, the Latin American Bureau of the United States Agency for International Development has been brought into the appropriate regional organization of the State Department. None of our studies directly illustrates this approach. A third vehicle for achieving coordination has been the drafting of policy papers by ad hoc interagency working groups which are then reviewed by regular interagency committees and often ultimately by the National Security Council. A fourth mechanism involves interagency coordination by the analytical method, recently evolved into a form referred to as Programming, Planning, and Budgeting Systems (PPBS).<sup>3</sup> Briefly the system as applied to foreign affairs would involve a specification of a limited number of broad outputs that embrace the United States interests in foreign affairs and then a view of the relationships of each agency's inputs (program and/or budget categories) to each of the outputs. More will be said about the third and fourth devices in Chapters 4 and 5.

Turning to the domestic scene, the mechanisms for managing the resources which the federal government pours into our cities in general are even less adequate. For a particular slum family and the neighborhood in which the family

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<sup>1</sup>Hammond (12), p. 899. (All references refer to the bibliography at the end of this volume.)

<sup>2</sup>Falk (8).

<sup>3</sup>Schultze (18).

resides, the problems of health, jobs, housing, education, delinquency, and political participation are in fact functionally interdependent problems. Yet, with few exceptions, the social service programs designed to treat these many problem areas are independently developed and the social services are separately delivered to a particular family and neighborhood.

The attempts to coordinate domestic programs have taken several broad forms, some of which parallel approaches utilized in foreign affairs. The first is structural merger or amalgamation of agencies with interrelated programs or functions. This approach has been used in the domestic arena to a much greater extent than in foreign affairs. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Transportation are the most relevant examples. The Johnson Administration's attempt to combine Commerce and Labor Departments failed. The second is the development of programs that cross departmental boundaries accompanied by the designation of an office to coordinate the activities of the several major departments. In the War on Poverty, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) was located in the Office of the President and given the relevant coordinative responsibility. However, as we shall observe in Chapter 8, under the Johnson Administration in 1966, OEO was eclipsed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in assuming the lead role in urban affairs. Later, after the field investigation for this volume was completed, the Nixon Administration appeared to be shifting operational responsibility for this area of coordination from HUD to an upgraded Bureau of the Budget. The third is the establishment of coordinating councils at various levels of the urban affairs bureaucracies without specific program focus, but with the general purpose to share information, confront conflicts, and coordinate policies and provide guidance and support for the implementation of interagency programs. During the period covered by this study, the four Great Society departments--OEO, HUD, The Department of Labor, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW)--were represented on councils or groups at many levels, including the Urban Cabinet, the under secretaries group, Joint Administrative Task Force (assistant secretaries for administration), and the Federal Executive Boards (operating at the city level). We will refer to these coordinative groups again in Chapters 8 and 9. In fact, Chapter 9 reports an effort to establish interagency councils at still another level--the regional level.

In many respects the organizational bottleneck is the most strategic. Out of interagency deliberations can come improvements in the models which guide program definition. If we can break down functional boundaries or readily cross them to achieve integrated and coordinated attacks on social problems, then our legislative committees, top bureaucrats, and other key officials are more likely to overcome the theoretical deficiencies. Similarly, if the government can demonstrate more impact from a more integrated and concerted use of existing funds, it can better justify larger programs with more generous funding.

Hence the need for more understanding of the conditions under which, and processes by which, conflict is resolved and integration occurs among

members of an interagency community. As one observer of foreign affairs management said, "Differences of opinion exist about how these requirements for policy agreement and program coordination can be most effectively met in Washington and abroad, and during the last dozen or so years the government has been involved in an extensive learning process."<sup>4</sup> This volume will attempt to record a variety of the learning experiences and help derive the lessons from them.

### Purposes

One of the major purposes of the volume is to assist directly those individuals who would like to improve the effectiveness of our federal bureaucracy in order to increase its capacities to help solve the major social problems threatening our society. In our own country, these problems include racism, poverty and pollution; within the foreign environment, they include the many obstacles associated with assisting an underdeveloped nation to reach its potential. To this end, almost every case study reports an innovative effort instigated by some official or some office to improve bureaucratic effectiveness. Most of the cases describe the techniques, strategies, and tactics of these officials and attempt to account for the successes and failures which resulted. The cases by themselves should be instructive for those bureaucrats who want to initiate integrative projects. It should also be useful to those higher government officials who want to create a context in which the integrative efforts have more chance of success. Finally, the cases should be suggestive to the behavioral scientists who would work toward these ends in a consulting role.

There have been relatively few studies describing interorganizational committees, particularly in bureaucratic communities. Therefore, the second purpose of the volume is to add to the small literature on interorganizational coordination. The present study complements the already abundant literature on intraorganizational relations and should be of interest to many organization theorists not personally familiar with the bureaucratic agencies. The material describes the institutional settings, the various forms of potential interdependencies which exist among units in these various settings and the types of interactions which do occur among these units.

A third purpose is to contribute to the general theories which explain the management of conflict and the achievement of integration in communities comprised of semi-autonomous units. Perhaps if we understand how a pluralistic bureaucracy achieves some higher state of integration, or why it fails to in the face of obvious need for more integration, then these insights may be used to generate hypotheses about integration in other semi-autonomous systems. Examples of this are national communities such as the European, Central American or North Atlantic communities. Similarly, we may hypothesize

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<sup>4</sup>Sapin (17).

specific similarities between interagency networks and conglomerate companies. Although the volume is confined to a treatment of the interagency context, it is intended as a contribution to our understanding of the more general phenomenon.

The theoretical treatment does not attempt to develop a theory that gives even treatment to all aspects of the integration of these bureaucratic communities. It has several specific and somewhat arbitrary foci, arbitrary in the sense that the author's own special prior interests influenced which of the many significant aspects of integration were conceptualized in detail. Thus, although a systems flow model is introduced in Chapter 2 to embrace all aspects of an effort at interagency integration, the relatively elaborate conceptualization is focused on a few aspects of integration, particularly the dynamics of interagency transactions and the instrumental roles of "third parties."

#### Interagency Networks as an Object of Organization Research

As just stated, one purpose of the volume is to complement the substantial literature on intraorganizational conflict and its management--a literature which the author and a colleague have reviewed elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> There is a smaller but growing literature containing research findings and conceptualizations focused on interorganizational relations.<sup>6</sup>

Warren has developed a spectrum of types of interunit relations which will help us identify the particular niche of the present research.<sup>7</sup> This spectrum identifies four types of interunit contexts; namely, unitary, federative, coalitional, and social choice, each distinguished by its patterns of social structure and behaviors. Warren hypothesizes differences along the six dimensions set forth in Table 1.1, and views his four contexts as points along the various dimensions rather than as discrete states. He is primarily concerned with the relations among community decision-making organizations, such as urban renewal authorities, chambers of commerce, welfare agencies and antipoverty groups. The unitary context, he says, is illustrated by a transportation authority, where divisions are deliberately organized for the achievement of inclusive goals. The federative context is exemplified by a council of social agencies, where the member agencies have their individual goals, but where there is some formal organization for the accomplishment of inclusive goals. The coalitional context is exemplified by ad hoc collaboration of several

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<sup>5</sup>Walton and Dutton (25).

<sup>6</sup>Clark (4), Thompson and McEwen (21), Dill (6), Litwak and Hylton (14), Thompson (20), Levine and White (13), Evan (7), Warren (28), Warren (27).

<sup>7</sup>Warren (28), pp. 396-419.

Table 1.1 - Types of Interunit Relations<sup>8</sup>

Dimensior	Type of Context			
	Unitary	Federative	Coalitional	Social Choice
Relation of units to an inclusive goal	Units organized for achievement of inclusive goals	Units with disparate goals, but some formal organization for inclusive goals	Units with disparate goals, but informal collaboration for inclusive goals	No inclusive goals
Locus of inclusive Decision making	At top of inclusive structure	At top of inclusive structure, subject to unit ratification	In interaction of units without a formal inclusive structure	Within units
Locus of authority	At top of hierarchy of inclusive structure	Primarily at unit level	Exclusively at unit level	Exclusively at unit level
Structural provision for division of labor	Units structured for division of labor within inclusive organization	Units structured autonomously, may agree to a division of labor, which may affect their structure	Units structured autonomously, may agree to ad hoc division of labor, without restructuring	No formally structured division of labor within an inclusive context
Commitment to a leadership sub-system	Norms of high commitment	Norms of moderate commitment	Commitment only to unit leaders	Commitment only to unit leaders
Prescribed collectivity-orientation of units	High	Moderate	Minimal	Little or none

<sup>8</sup>Reproduced from Warren (28), p. 406.



organizations to attain a specific objective, such as persuading a firm to locate in the community or developing a proposal for federal funding. The social choice context is exemplified by the autonomous behavior of a number of organizations related to a particular issue of concern to each of them, such as the location of a highway.

Most organizational research on interunit relations, according to Warren's conceptualization, has involved the unitary type of context. In contrast, the interagency efforts studied here are typically initiatives designed to move a particular interagency community from social choice to coalitional, or from coalitional to federative type. A few of our cases treat initiatives intended to improve coordinative processes without changing the current federative or coalitional structure of the community.

The interorganizational studies referred to above also treat Warren's federative and coalitional types of contexts. However, the approach of the present study is complementary to the approach typically reflected in these earlier studies. Their orientation is sociological; this one is social psychological. Where they emphasize the determinant character of the broad structural factors in interorganization situations, the theoretical interest here is in the dynamics at the interorganizational interfaces and the influence of relatively minor structural modifications. The practical concern of this study is the quality of conflict resolution and of the integrative results which can be obtained within the basic federal bureaucratic structure by making changes on the margin--in behavioral skills, in adding integrative mechanisms and roles, and in modest structural changes. The present study shares some of the spirit of Pruitt's study of problem solving in the Department of State<sup>9</sup> and of Mott's description of a particular interagency council at the state level in New York.<sup>10</sup>

Within our conception, "interagency conflict" may involve entire agencies or merely agency representatives. It may have its foundation in stereotypes and emotional reactions or in agency roles and missions. It may reflect differences over facts, methods, or goal. To illustrate: different agencies' representatives may hold opposing orientations toward U.S. loans to Brazil or make different assessments of the student movement in Brazil. Two urban agencies may have philosophically-based differences regarding the priority to be given to citizen participation in an interagency program that was initially designed to rationalize the delivery of social services. Agencies may disagree about how much funding support each should provide an interagency program. Role conflict may mark the relations among representatives on an interagency committee.

Bureaucratic conflict is not assumed to be necessarily counterproductive to the interests of the people and government of the United States. Our pluralistic bureaucracy has certain advantages, many of which are realized

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<sup>9</sup>Pruitt (16).

<sup>10</sup>Mott (15).

through conflictive processes. We may mention a few of the advantages. First, some interagency rivalry may tend to increase the motivation and energy available within each agency to do the tasks required by the social system. Second, the greater diversity of viewpoints and heightened sense of urgency which accompany conflict may increase the rate of social innovation. Third, each agency may develop increased understanding of its own position because the conflict forces it to articulate its views and bring forth all supporting arguments.

But interagency conflict can be costly as well. The debate of substantive issues and the competition for leadership roles sometimes result in stalemates which waste resources and arrest social progress. In some cases two agencies may be not only advocating opposing positions, but also implementing programs that work at cross purposes, each cancelling the other's efforts. In a few cases something of this sort is justified in terms of the U.S. government policy to "cover its bets" with more than one political power group in a foreign country or more than one domestic constituency. But in other cases it lacks even this rationale of risk minimization.

The author's interest in conflict management is geared to the idea of moving toward an optimum level of conflict and toward more constructive types of conflict. The assessment reflected in this volume is that in each of the cases studied, conflict could have been better managed.

As we use it, integration is a somewhat broader concept than conflict management. Applied to the interagency community, we have in mind the development of more enduring qualities of policy coherence, program coordination, open communication channels, and capacities to effectively manage the conflicts which arise. The theoretical concepts and the empirical findings of the study will provide more definition to the concept of integration.

### Preview of the Volume

According to the plan of this volume, Part I consists of two chapters of introductory and theoretical material; Part II presents separate reports on many interagency situations; and Part III reviews the material from the various studies, making comparisons and contrasts within several conceptualizations of the phenomena, and drawing a number of general conclusions. Chapters 3-9 in Part II treat respectively the following seven interagency efforts, presented chronologically, in the sequence in which the field investigations were conducted.

1. The regularized patterns of interagency decision making in a large overseas mission of the United States, involving the Ambassador and his office staff, and members of the country team including State's economic and political ministers as well as top officials of other agency missions present in the country; namely, United States Agency for International Development (AID), United States Information Service (USIS); the several military services, Agriculture, Treasury, Commerce, Labor, Peace Corps, and intelligence groups.

2. The innovative effort of one country director (the ambassador's counterpart in the Washington hierarchy of State) to build a functioning interagency group comprised of the appropriate desk officers, each concerned with his agency's programs, activities, or responsibilities in the particular overseas mission involved. The group became the Washington counterpart of the country team in the field.
3. The functioning of an interagency working group charged with proposing a long-term foreign policy toward Country X. The group was chaired by a senior Foreign Service Officer on the Policy Planning Council of the Department of State and comprised of officials from all foreign affair agencies. Typically, the agencies' representative to the group was the official most concerned with that agency's activities in Country X. The task of the group was to pool and synthesize their specialized information, examine their diverse interests and differing policy concerns, and then, in the context of some understanding of broad U.S. goals vis-à-vis nations such as Country X, develop a long-term policy statement which could be recommended ultimately to the top U.S. foreign policy makers.
4. The operations of the first cycle of an interagency effort at program planning for each of the countries in the Latin American region and for the region as a whole. It represented an experimental and limited effort in the spirit of a comprehensive foreign affairs planning, programming and budgeting system. The policy- and program-planning documents for each country were developed in the overseas missions under the leadership of ambassadors and then reviewed by successive levels of interagency committees in Washington. Again, with a few exceptions, all of the foreign affairs agencies were required to participate in the development and review of these documents.
5. The dramatic and unusual efforts of an ambassador to reduce the U.S. personnel in a large U.S. mission by as much as 50%, affecting the staffs of all agencies (State, Military, AID, USIS, etc.) in the mission. In his efforts, which were not uniformly well received by other agencies' officials in the mission, he utilized an interagency task force of higher level Washington officials to review his reduction plans. The Washington team spent several weeks in the field interviewing mission personnel and deliberating among themselves, leading to their recommendations regarding the level of reduction in each agency staff consistent with overall U.S. interests.

6. The functioning of a federal management system for the Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program (NCPPI), an interagency program launched in August, 1966, which had established or was in the process of developing viable pilot centers in each of 14 cities. Like the Model Cities Program, which was launched somewhat later, the NCPPI was both interagency (involving HUD in a lead role, The Bureau of the Budget in both initiating and evaluation roles, and OEO, HEW, and Labor as participating program agencies) and intergovernmental in character (involving federal, state, and city governments). The basic objectives of the NCPPI were to develop multi-purpose service centers concentrating, interrelating and integrating the many federal, state and local services intended to cure the ills of city ghettos; and to develop capacities for residents to influence or control the center and thereby ensure that service programs are responsive to the needs of residents and are maximally available to them.
7. Attempts to establish regional coordinating groups comprised of the regional directors of four urban affairs agencies--HUD, HEW, OEO, and Labor. Effort to develop these regional councils in four geographic regions occurred at the initiative of a division within the Bureau of the Budget, but on terms that had to be negotiated with the various participating agencies.

The general concept we apply to the phenomena represented by these seven situations is "interagency effort." It is assumed that these efforts have integrative purposes. More precise terms, such as interagency project, exercise, or initiative each cover some of the situations studied, but not all of them. In fact, it is because of the diversity in the forms which the seven efforts take, that such a large and somewhat unwieldy number of case studies are included.

The reader is recommended to consider alternate patterns for approaching the contents of this volume. If he has no interest in theory, he may skim Chapter 2. He will still be exposed to the theory in a less systematic way in the case summaries and especially in Part III. Or, if a reader prefers to become acquainted with the phenomena before he considers the theory, he is advised to read many of the case studies in Part II and perhaps even the analyses and conclusions in Part III before he tackles the relatively compacted statement of theory in Chapter 2.

While the case studies in Part II complement each other in the approaches they represent, each can stand more or less by itself so that without too much less understanding the reader can be as selective as he chooses to be, based, for example, on his reactions to the brief descriptions provided above.

### How the Research was Conducted

During 1966-1968, the author was active as an organizational consultant first with the Department of State and subsequently with the Bureau of the Budget. In both relationships he was affiliated with the NTL-Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, which had been contracted by these agencies to supply organizational development consultation. The Institute for Applied Behavioral Science was involved in organizational diagnosis, counsel, and training. The author's activities centered on diagnosis and the derivative recommendations. The organizational problems of particular interest were interagency ones. In fact, it was because of his prior interest in researching the role of third parties in interagency relations that he agreed to become extensively involved in these consulting programs. Both the consulting and client organizations understood and encouraged the parallel research interests.

In the author's opinion, the dual interests facilitated both the consulting and research. The consulting derived benefit from the additional research-oriented analyses of the data which were conducted in parallel to the consulting work on the project.

The consulting, in turn, was of benefit to the research in a number of ways: first, the consulting role and the contacts it created provided access to situations which the author could not otherwise have negotiated; second, the clients provided a built-in check on the reliability of the data, the reasonableness of interpretations, and their relevance to the world of action; third, because the consulting reports had relevance to the research, the study could include almost twice as many interagency efforts as the research budget by itself would have permitted, increasing the scope of the study and generality of the findings.

The first four of the five cases on foreign affairs were related to a consulting project under the auspices of the ACORD Program of the Department of State (ACORD is an acronym for Action for Organizational Development), a program office reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Administration. The fifth case, a study of Operation Topsy in the U.S. mission in Brazil, occurred after an economy move had virtually liquidated the ACORD program. Therefore, the field investigation was conducted with the research role as the primary one; a consulting report was submitted to the Ambassador as a matter of courtesy.

Similarly, one of the two cases which deal with the urban affairs community (the Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program) was related to a consulting project under the auspices of the Office of Executive Management (OEM) of the Bureau of the Budget. The second study, recording OEM's efforts to establish federal regional councils, was conducted strictly as a research project. The author did attend one regional council conference as a consultant, but primarily for the purpose of providing expert testimony on the interagency

problems encountered in the Neighborhood Center Pilot Program rather than to assist OEM in their change project. In both cases where the research was not coupled with a consulting project, access was nevertheless afforded because of contacts made as a consultant and because the subjects of the research expected the research projects to be of benefit to them.

To illustrate the type of consulting framework within which the organizational diagnosis was first formulated, we can specify the purposes for which one report was developed. The report analyzing the innovative Brazil Interdepartmental Group (the subject of Chapter 4) was developed with the following purposes in mind: First, the report was to serve as a basis for group members to (a) review and evaluate their experiences to date, and (b) to strengthen the mechanism in ways which they deemed appropriate. Second, it was intended to assist the ACORD staff and consultants in (a) assessing the organizational and personal development needs and opportunities which exist in the interagency networks involving the Department of State; and (b) designing training and consulting approaches to meet these needs. Third, it was intended to help disseminate innovation; thus it was to be distributed to some other officials in the Department of State who have similar responsibilities for interagency matters.

The research methodology for this volume involved both observation of interagency meetings and interviews with persons involved in the interagency efforts under study. The interviews were typically semi-structured, guided by questions tailored to the particular interagency effort. However, frameworks which implicitly or explicitly influenced the diagnostic interviewing are set forth in Chapter 2. A particular part of a framework was elaborated or abbreviated from one case to the next as the focal interest shifted. Thus, the first case involved an elaborate research of the forces toward and against interagency collaboration which inhere in that interagency context. Then when one could quickly ascertain that the forces identified in the first study were also operative in largely (but not completely) the same way in the second study, the focus could shift to understanding the structure and process of the interagency effort and how they accounted for the results of the effort. And so on.

A footnote in each case will indicate when the field investigation was conducted, report which classes of officials were interviewed, and, in a few cases, identify others who conducted some of the field interviews.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND HYPOTHESES

Two theoretical frameworks have influenced the data gathering and analysis in the case studies. In both cases the frameworks and the hypotheses were first generated in an institutional setting other than the interagency one. Because most aspects of these theories have been elaborated and illustrated in detail elsewhere, our synthesis and extension of these here is relatively succinct and compact in form. Also, obviously many of the ideas stated cryptically in this chapter will be further elaborated and illustrated in the case studies and in the concluding chapters.

#### Overall Flow Model of Integrative Efforts

The general model we use to analyze interagency efforts is a "flow model" or systems model, which postulates the general interrelationships among the following four aspects of an interunit effort: (1) several relevant general forces in the institutional environment; (2) the design or structure of particular integrative efforts; (3) the actual pattern of interunit processes which characterize the effort, including the leadership or third party activities in managing interunit interfaces; (4) the results of integrative efforts, including achievement of primary and secondary goals. These many aspects of integrative efforts and their major interrelationships are shown in the flow model in Figure 2.1. The model is one that the author has found useful in other institutional settings<sup>1</sup> and was expected to prove applicable to this one as well. The seven case studies will increase our understanding of the actual content of each of the component aspects of an interagency effort (represented by the boxes, circles, etc. in Figure 2.1) and the interrelationships among the aspects (arrows).

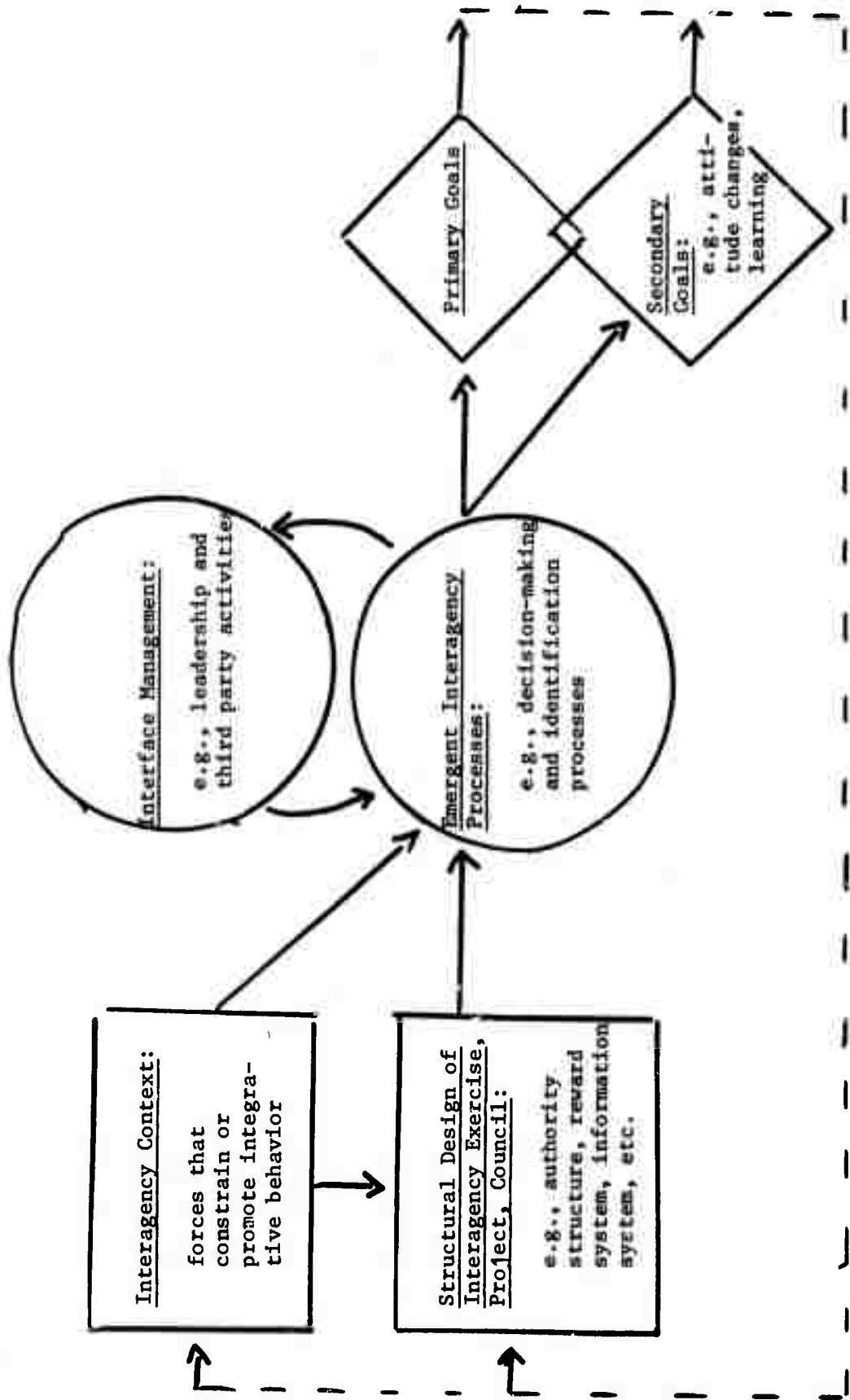
#### Interagency Context

The model incorporates general forces in the interagency context which have the effect of either promoting or constraining integrative behavior in the interagency setting. These forces provide incentives for the development of interagency mechanisms; they also constrain and help shape their design. Thus, the study will attempt to identify these contextual forces and their influences.

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<sup>1</sup>Walton and Dutton (25).

Figure 2.1 - Flow Model of an Interagency Effort





### Structural Design of the Interagency Effort

The model takes account of the immediate structure of the interagency situation, including the authority attached to the lead role and the structure the particular effort takes, such as a voluntary representative council or a mandatory planning exercise. Thus, in reviewing these seven experiences, we will ask: What are significant elements designed into these interagency efforts?

### Interagency Processes and Interface Management

The pattern of roles, role relationships and transactions which occur in an interagency council, management system or planning exercise are in part a function of the particular design of the interagency mechanism, but also, in part, of the more pervasive forces in the interagency environment. In addition, these patterns are purposively influenced by persons in leadership or third party roles. This last type of influence is referred to as interface management in Figure 2.1 where it is shown as a feedback loop integral to the on-going process. Our review of these seven cases will provide some answers to the following questions: What characteristic patterns and dynamics are set into motion by interagency efforts, e.g., conflict-cooperation, avoidance-engagement, unilateral-participative leadership, fragmented-cohesive group relations, etc.? How can the observed patterns be explained, in terms of basic contextual factors, structural and procedural elements designed into this particular effort, and/or the purposive behavioral strategies of leaders or third parties?

### Primary Goals and Secondary Benefits

Two types of payoffs are considered: (1) achievement of the primary goals of an exercise, such as a coherent and high quality interagency planning document; and (2) the realization of secondary benefits from the exercise, such as mutual education or closer relationships among the representatives of several agencies. These secondary benefits may serve to promote one of the primary purposes of the interagency efforts such as more coordinated program implementation or they may have some feedback effect modifying either the factors treated here as contextual or the design of the present and future interagency mechanisms. Our case studies will illustrate the various outcomes.

### A Theory of Interunit Interaction and Third Party Interventions

An important orientation of this study was social psychological. We had a particular interest in the processes of interaction between and among agencies' representatives. We wanted to test the applicability of a theory previously formulated by the author to explain the interunit

processes that occur in joint task settings,<sup>2</sup> and the third party interventions that can facilitate constructive interunit processes.<sup>3</sup>

The theory distinguishes four interaction processes: Two purposive processes, task cooperation and competition, are instrumental to the formal purposes of the interunit relations. Two purposive social processes, identity reinforcement and identity conflict, are expressive of the way parties view themselves, compared with how they are viewed by each other. A conceptual space is presented which helps one visualize different interaction patterns with various mixtures of these four processes. Also a set of propositions are postulated regarding the effect of each process on each of the other three processes. The scheme is described and illustrated as if the transactions involved two parties; however, this is more a matter of convenience than conceptual necessity. The ideas are applicable to multilateral as well as bilateral negotiations.

The theory goes beyond postulating the dynamic tendencies which occur in the interunit settings. The conceptual space and propositions referred to earlier also provide a basis for specifying alternative strategies for managing conflict and promoting integration. Third party interventions may be pursuant to any of these alternative strategies. However, the effectiveness of the intervention is hypothesized to depend on certain attributes of the third party.

#### Instrumental Stakes and Processes

It is a fundamental premise of the theory being developed here that interagency interactions have both instrumental and expressive meanings for the participants. Instrumental stakes refer to the implications which the joint task has for the goal achievement of participating agencies. The following are illustrative of the instrumental stakes in the setting studied:

Policy commitments: In interagency plans, how much emphasis will be given the programs and philosophies of each participating agency?

Contributions: How much of each agency's scarce resources--in terms of funds and manpower--will be committed to an interagency venture?

Bureaucratic procedures: Which agency's normal procedures will be utilized in an interagency effort when the participating agencies each use different procedures normally?

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<sup>2</sup>Walton (22).

<sup>3</sup>Walton (23) and Walton (24).

Credit and blame: How much credit will each agency receive from apparent successes in interagency ventures and how much blame will each agency receive in the event of failures?

The preferences of two parties respectively regarding the instrumental stakes can be basically compatible and are appropriately pursued by cooperative task activities. Alternately, they can be fundamentally incompatible and are appropriately pursued by competitive task activities. In order to make the theory clearer in its presentation, it will be illustrated in terms of a particular type of joint task, namely, joint decision making. In joint decision-making settings, collaborative potential is realized via problem solving and conflict potential leads to a bargaining type of decision process.

The problem-solving type of decision making appropriately occurs when and to the extent that the joint gain available to the parties is variable, not fixed. Thus, under problem solving, total payoffs vary as a function of participants' abilities to discover how their basic interests are complementary or coincidental as well as their abilities to invent mechanisms for exploiting this collaborative potential.

The process involves the following activities: The parties identify and define agenda items or areas of mutual concern in terms of the fundamental needs involved. There is a collaborative effort to reality test--to test assumptions about the motives, needs, and preferences of others, and about the present state of the situation. Reality testing includes accurate assessment of the current dissatisfactions being experienced by either or both parties. Another activity involves searching for alternate courses of action and jointly assessing all of the consequences that might follow from each alternative. Potential solutions which would increase the joint gain are usually not immediately apparent, but have to be discovered or invented. Similarly, the full consequences of a given course of action are not obvious, but have to be inferred from all of the facts which can be made available. The effectiveness of this step depends upon a thorough, accurate exchange and pooling of information about alternatives and their consequences. The problem-solving process also entails the identification of the largest sum of values possible, given the alternatives. The parties must be as clear as possible about their respective preferences.

The bargaining type of decision making appropriately occurs when and to the extent that the joint gain available to the parties is a fixed sum and their relative shares are not yet determined. Behaviorally, bargaining involves the following types of pre-decision activities on the part of both parties: One party attempts to modify the second's perceptions of the utilities associated with various courses of action in such a way that the second party will provide less resistance to decisions the first party favors. Also, the first party attempts to structure the second's expectations about what outcomes would be minimally acceptable to the first. Essential to bargaining are tactics which involve the taking of bargaining positions and communication of threats, preventing one's opponent from implementing the same operations,

and rationalizing away by either party of earlier commitments which become untenable. In taking a bargaining position, both the verbal and tacit communication is important: How much finality is implied? How specifically is the position indicated? And what consequences seem to be associated with a failure to reach agreement? Each of these considerations requires deliberateness in communicating with the other. However, equally important are the tactics which lend credibility to these communications: presenting one's proposal first, reducing it to writing and persisting in discussing it; arousing one's organization in support of a position; taking a stand publicly; behaving belligerently, to mention but a few possibilities.

#### Expressive Stakes and Related Processes

Expressive behaviors include a participant's behavior that expresses who the person and the group he represents want to be in the situation and that expresses how he perceives and feels about other participants and the group they represent. Individuals have certain characteristic identity needs which can become activated in the situation, a phenomenon well documented in the sociological and psychological literature, where self-concepts have often been viewed as meta-valued.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, we believe that institutions have identities, statuses or images which their members want to establish or maintain. The identity attributes which may be at stake are innumerable. A party to joint decision making may want to be seen, for example, as superior or inferior or equal to the other party, as similar to or different from the other party, as aloof or committed, as confident or tentative, as knowledgeable or inexperienced, as a generalist or a specialist, as loyal or independent, as tough, as reasonable, as sophisticated, as approachable, as likeable, as a member of a particular social class or profession, etc.

If the two parties' identity needs that are stimulated in the interaction setting are reciprocal or congruent with each other, this compatibility leads to identity reinforcement: one's identity bids are confirmed by the other.

When the salient expressive needs are not compatible, the result is identity conflict: assertions of identity by one participant are frustrated by identity denying actions by the other who consciously or unconsciously refuses to accept the first's image of himself or his organization. Initiatives to assert one's identity include self-references, posturing and telling anecdotes about past experiences that lay claim to the preferred attributes. Identity initiatives also include manipulating the agenda or discussion format in order to facilitate a participant's efforts to do any of the above, as well as choosing physical aspects of the setting for the meeting, e.g., the location, the type of conveniences available, etc., which tend to create the appropriate identity.

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<sup>4</sup>Bennes et al. (1), Goffman (10), Gordon and Gergen (11), Fouriezos et al. (9).

Identity-denying responses can involve passively ignoring the other's identity bids, continuing to treat him as initially perceived; or more deliberately undermining the other's efforts to establish his preferred identity. Until an official has some reason to believe that he and the organization he represents are seen in a way that he regards as minimally satisfactory, his main agenda in a newly formed joint decision-making group is to present himself and his organization to other participants in the preferred way.

Expressive aspects of interunit decision making can involve personality based, as well as institutionally based, preferences. For example, an official representative of one organization may prefer to operate in a formal structure which allows him to maintain high social distance from the official representing the other organization, whereas the latter may prefer informality and wish to become more acquainted on a personal basis.

The following situation (not drawn from the cases reported later in the volume) illustrates initial identity conflict giving way to identity reinforcement:

The Peace Corps in an overseas mission had a deeply felt preference to be differentiated from other U.S. agencies in that country. This identity issue was mildly activated in any joint deliberations between the Peace Corps, AID or State and strongly activated in discussions involving the Military Assistance Groups and the CIA. Expressive behaviors, in the sense used here, were those actions by the Peace Corps' officials in meetings which tended to preserve the Peace Corps' preferred identity. These behaviors took the form of passive or active resistance to ideas voiced by other representatives, and using styles of posture and presentation that reflected but also exaggerated the differences between the operating patterns of the various agencies.

The bids to establish the preferred identity of the Peace Corps--in particular to be highly differentiated--were at first opposed and then eventually accepted by the representatives of other agencies. Accordingly, the Peace Corps representatives' behaviors geared to this aspect of the interaction eventually decreased both in quantity and in their disruptiveness to decision making. The situation moved from identity conflict to identity reinforcement.

It should be clear from the above example that "identity conflict" does not necessarily refer to two persons or groups striving for a limited supply of the same attributes (e.g., each wanting to be seen as superior) but merely refers to a condition where one's bid for a particular identity is consciously or unconsciously opposed by the other--for whatever reasons. If the preferred identities of each party are denied by the other, the identity competition is symmetrical. While the magnitude of identity

conflict is increased, the symmetrical condition is often easier to resolve because it creates mutual and balanced motivation to work through or accommodate on the identity issues.

### Mixed Interaction Systems - A Conceptual Space

Figure 2.2 presents a conceptual space showing the four processes and the conditions which produce them. Most interaction systems contain all four processes. But the relative prevalence of each of the four processes differs from one setting to another and can change over time. The composition of a particular setting can be visualized within the space. Figure 2.3a contains a predominantly competitive setting in which there is more bargaining than problem solving, and more identity denial than confirmation activities. Figure 2.3b depicts a negotiation almost exclusively attendant to the substantive issues, with only a minimal concern for organizational or personal identities. Commercial negotiations between government and industrial firms and their suppliers often fit this latter pattern. However, the interagency relations studied in both the foreign affairs and urban affairs communities typically involved more status conflict than shown in 2.3b.

### Relationships Among the Four Processes

These processes do not occur in parallel without affecting each other. Identity conflict and reinforcement--which one might readily concede are factors in most human encounters--are more than noise in the interagency decision-making situation. These affect-laden processes interact with the two decision-making processes in ways that are systematic and predictable. The effect of one process on another will predictably facilitate, interfere, complicate, intensify, or exacerbate another process. The following general propositions are offered (also see Figure 2.4):

Problem solving interferes with bargaining

Bargaining interferes with problem solving

Identity conflict interferes with problem solving; whereas  
identity reinforcement facilitates problem solving

Problem solving promotes identity reinforcement and  
diminishes identity conflict

Identity conflict and reinforcement both have varied  
and mixed effects on bargaining

Bargaining promotes identity competition and diminishes  
identity reinforcement

Figure 2.2 - A Conceptual Space for  
Interaction Processes

		<u>Values at Stake for P and O</u>	
		Instrumental Stakes	Expressive Stakes
Relationship between the Interrelated Goals or Preferences of P and O	Compatible	Collaborative Task Activities, e.g. Problem Solving	Identity Reinforcement
	Incompatible	Competitive Task Activities, e.g. Bargaining	Identity Conflict

Figure 2.3

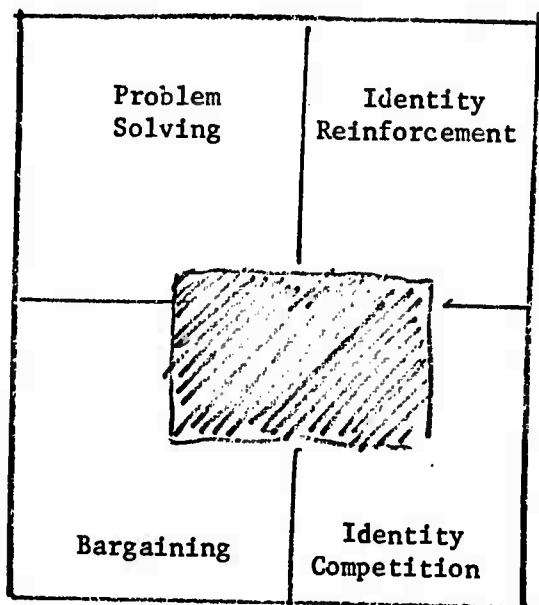


Figure 2.3a

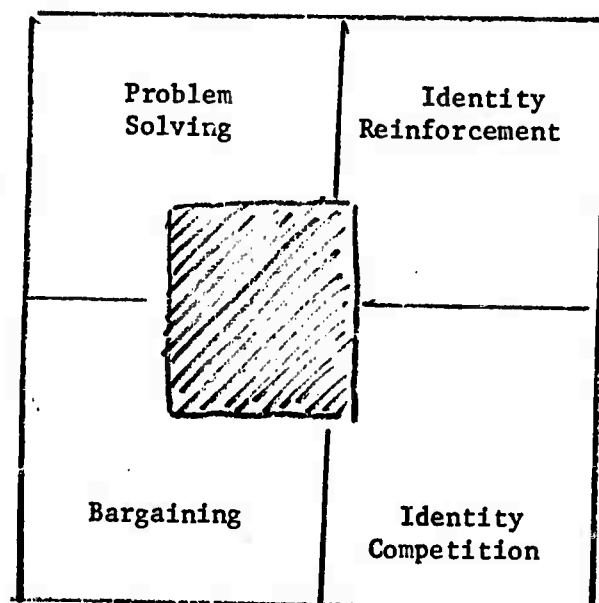
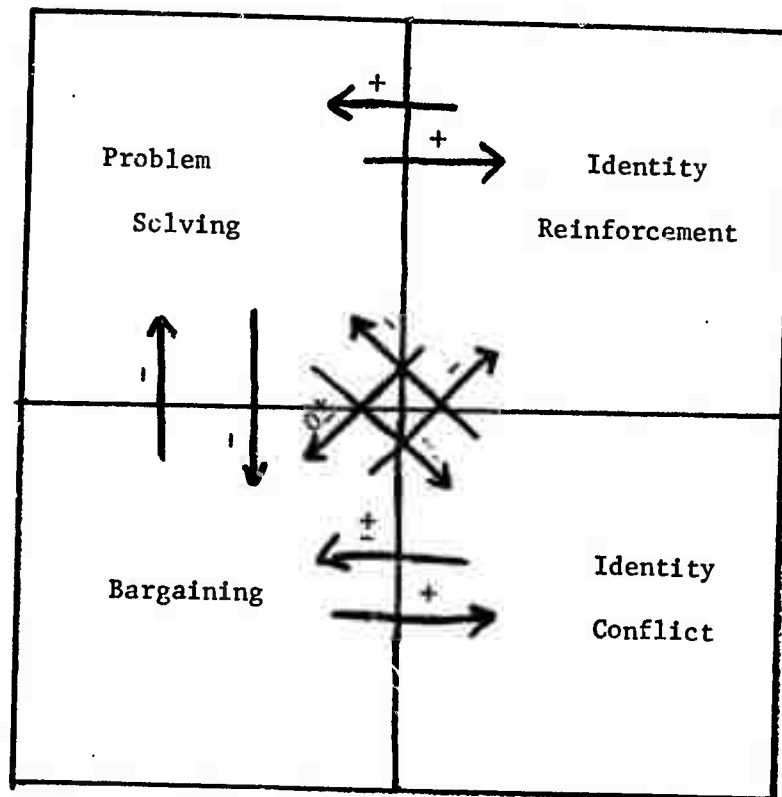


Figure 2.3b



Figure 2.4 - Interprocess Effects: Propositions



Keys

- + indicates facilitating or promoting effect of one process on the other
- indicates an interfering or diminishing effect
- 0 indicates that one process is relatively neutral with respect to the second process
- + indicates the significant possibility of both facilitating and interfering effects

**Problem Solving and Bargaining: Mutually Interfering.** A cornerstone factor in the present effort to develop a theory of joint decision making is the mutually interfering nature of bargaining and problem solving when they occur in the same interaction system, a relationship which we have analyzed in detail elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> A point-by-point analysis of the two joint decision processes reveals many contrasting and contradictory elements which underlie their mutually interfering effects. The elements listed under each column heading are sometimes, if not always, instrumental behaviors or tendencies for the type of process identified in the column heading.

**Bargaining**

Overstatement of own goals and preferences

Tendency to include pseudo issues or low priority objectives as "trading horses"

Tendency to state the agenda issue in terms of alternate solutions

Tendency to define the issue or problem in a way which "points" to the solution presently preferred by the party

Tendency for discussion to center only on alternate solutions presently favored by one party or the other and each alternative is discussed only at the insistence of that party

The following behaviors are often used to communicate tactical commitment: linking preferred solution to a principle; use of preplanned speeches; reducing preferred solution to writing, etc.

Occasionally moves are instrumental which threaten surprise and confuse the other

**Problem Solving**

Accurate statement of goals and preferences

Parties conscientiously include only genuine issues

Tendency to state the agenda issue in terms of underlying problems, needs, concerns, objectives

Tendency to define the agenda issue item in a way which increases the likelihood that new solutions will be invented or discovered

Emphasis is on generating many alternatives and genuine discussion is devoted to alternatives before either party has judged it to be minimally acceptable to itself

Solutions are considered in terms of their specific implications rather than tied to principles; emphasis is upon spontaneous response

Threats, surprise and confusion are always disruptive

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<sup>5</sup>Walton and McKersie (26).

### Bargaining

Tendency for interunit contacts to be channelled, i.e., confined to few persons; this controls information made available to the other

Sometimes tactical for participant to have limited authority to make decisions; this frustrates commitments and some other influence attempts of the other

### Problem Solving

More rather than fewer persons from two units are involved; this increases the availability of information and the diversity of viewpoints

Usually will involve participants who have knowledge and authority to reach decisions

The contradictory orientations and tactical requirements of the two processes provide dilemmas for decision makers in mixed-motive situations: Should a party make a relatively complete investment in the problem-solving activity and thus tend to increase the positive values available to the two parties, but increase his own vulnerability in the interparty bargaining process? Or should the party engage in relatively less problem solving, in effect accepting whatever joint positive values are already available, and thus minimize his vulnerability in bargaining? The essential bind is that, among other things, problem solving requires the party to identify his true needs, which makes it extremely difficult for him to engage subsequently in hard bargaining since the latter involves misrepresentation of his needs. On the other hand, strategies which do not involve the accurate identification of needs will result in lower joint utilities. The second party to the mixed processes faces exactly the same dilemmas.

Thus, problem solving and bargaining are not merely contrasting alternatives, but mutually interfering when mixed.

Problem-solving tactics often weaken one's bargaining position and preclude certain advantageous bargaining tactics. Conversely, many bargaining tactics limit the extent to which the parties can discover and exploit the integrative potential. Thus, in mixed process situations, either one or both processes will be relatively less effectively executed. Also, the mixed process, compared with either process in pure form, is probably less efficient in the sense that it would consume relatively more social and psychological energy.

Problem Solving and Identity Processes. It was stated earlier that participants to joint decision making are preoccupied with establishing their respective identities so long as the identities are not satisfactory. This does not mean necessarily that the stated agenda of the meetings is to negotiate status or identity of each participant. Most people are quite skillful in working on this social problem of establishing an identity in the context of the formal task, e.g., an interunit decision task. However, the information introduced for this social purpose is often only superficially relevant to the decision task. Similarly, the initial disagreements

about facts and meeting ground rules often reflect at least one of the participant's efforts to impress upon the other that he must be taken seriously--as a person, indeed as a particular type of person.

Mutually acceptable and acknowledged identities promote trust. Trust in turn enhances the accuracy of interpersonal communication judgments to another--both important ingredients of problem solving. Under identity reinforcement conditions, participants derive more gratification from, and evidence more commitment to, the interaction process, and as a result assign less "cost" to the time they spend on the decision process.

Why is it hypothesized that identity conflict interferes with problem solving? Our reasoning is as follows: (a) While most people are quite skillful at working on their identity in the context of a task, the process of pursuing the temporarily denied but preferred identity often involves creating false issues and other behavior off-target to the issues at hand. (b) The denial of a satisfying identity increases the costs--subjective disutilities--the participant associates with time he spends in the interorganization processes. (c) The denial of a preferred identity in the situation is experienced as more or less threatening which at higher levels of threat deteriorates cognitive functioning. (d) The competitive orientation induced by identity conflict is accompanied by perceptual distortions in the direction of underestimating areas of actual or potential agreement, and by judgmental distortions in the direction of overvaluing one's own contributions and downgrading the ideas of others.<sup>6</sup> Both of these distortions increase the likelihood of bargaining impasses. (e) The competitive orientation often leads to a substitution of objectives in the sense that the idea of defeating the other party begins to take on positive value.

Where the goals are compatible and both parties perceive the appropriate decision process to be problem solving and yet disagreements persist over assumptions, fact, decision-making methods and courses of action, it is highly likely that parties are pursuing mutually competitive identities.

Thus far we have explored the effects of identity processes on problem solving. To consider the reverse direction of influence, the effect of problem solving is to enlarge the area of identity affirmation and identity conflict. Why? Problem solving involves (a) focus on common goals that help enlarge the areas of common identification; (b) an open information-sharing process that promotes trust and mutual acceptance of each other; (c) interdependently constructive activities that, if successful, tend to promote a sense of mutual accomplishment, self-worth and respect for each other's competence. Thus, for example, if the participants enter into the interorganizational deliberations with negative stereotypes of members of the other organizations, and if the common interests are sufficiently compelling that problem solving occurs nevertheless, then stereotypes are likely to give way.

Bargaining and Identity Processes. On the one hand, identity conflict decreases (and identity reinforcement increases) the efficiency and effectiveness of bargaining in many of the same ways it affected problem solving.

On the other hand, an analysis of the tactics of bargaining and the behaviors associated with identity conflict and reinforcement reveals another and complementary picture. First, instrumental conflict or bargaining is entered into with additional motivation because the conflict tactics chosen primarily for bargaining purposes (listed earlier) have expressive value as well. Second, certain behaviors which are primarily expressive in their origin (e.g., abrupt withdrawal from a joint program, a refusal to meet on the other's terms, delay in the clearance of an interagency document) often also have value for instrumental conflict--improving bargaining power or directly winning certain substantive concessions. Third, certain actions instrumental to bargaining are more effective if they are accompanied by high identity conflict. For example, the uses of "threats" tactical to bargaining are more credible in the context of intense intergroup identity conflict. The above are ways the identity conflict can facilitate the bargaining efforts of one party vis-à-vis the other. It can be said to "promote" the interparty process, when the initially weaker of two parties wants to change the status quo and must utilize such tactics to force negotiations. There is nothing comparable to these consequences in the case of problem solving.

In view of the considerations above, if we assume two interdependent parties of comparable strength who are also predisposed to bargain with each other, then we can expect identity processes to have the following consequences for bargaining: Absolute identity affirmation would detract from the enthusiasm but enhance the technical proficiency with which bargaining is pursued by participants. A moderate level of identity conflict would promote bargaining behavior which is enthusiastic and imaginative with a slightly increased probability of impasse. A high level of identity competition would produce a process pursued both relentlessly and erratically and highly likely to create impasses; as face issues get confused with bargaining positions, default outcomes would become likely.

Turning to the other direction of influence, bargaining places a strain on an expressively positive relationship. Bluffs, information rationing, distortion and the win-lose-compromise character of the process in its pure form--these all tend to create social distance in a relationship, undermine trust and mutual respect and lead to attribution of unfavorable identities.

#### Strategies of Managing Conflict: Alternative Interventions

The propositions above help explicate a number of alternative strategies of conflict resolution and control:

1. Modify the context and/or structure of the situation to reduce conflict potential: Since bargaining (and other forms of task competition) and identity conflict reflect actual or perceived incompatibilities in the instrumental and expressive stakes in the situation, conflict can be reduced by increasing the compatibility of the stakes.

2. Transfer or share responsibility for deciding an issue in conflict: Bargaining itself is a form of conflict. In addition it tends to promote or perpetuate identity conflict. Therefore conflict in the interunit system is directly, and may also be indirectly, reduced if the issue is decided or strongly influenced by another agent.

3. Facilitate the parties' efforts to resolve an issue in conflict: Bargaining tends to undermine problem solving and identity conflict tends to interfere with both types of decision making. Acknowledging these as tendencies, techniques exist to minimize them.

4. Improve affective relations via problem-solving tasks or other collaborative task activities: Because of the tendency for problem solving to promote identity reinforcement, one can use problem-solving and other collaborative tasks to modify conflict-prone relationships. The development of mutually reinforcing identities in turn increases the parties' capacity to deal with future substantive disagreements.

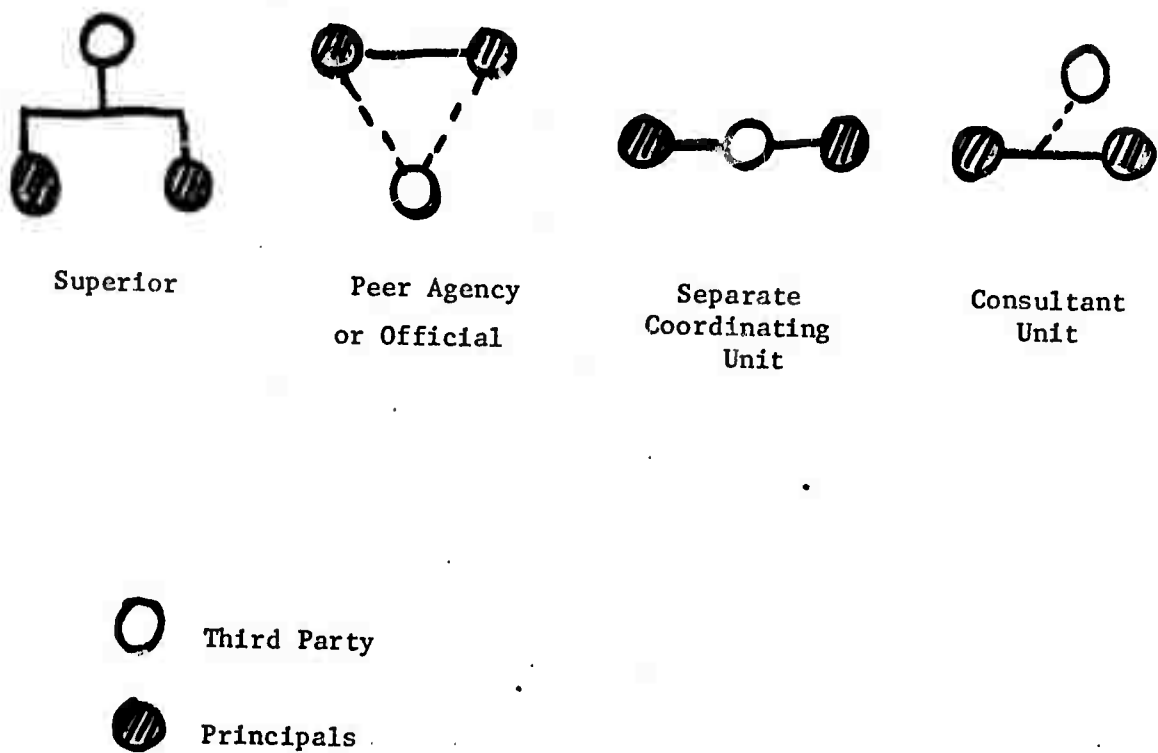
5. Improve affective relations via sociotherapy, involving, for example, the diagnostic insight and procedures for "working-through" antagonistic feelings: The interunit attitudes which create identity conflict can sometimes be the direct target of a change effort. Again, as with the fourth strategy, we rely on the proposition that any increase in identity reinforcement increases the parties' capacity to manage conflict constructively.

These five strategies may be initiated by the principals to the inter-unit relationship or by some third party. The term "intervention strategies" will be applied to them whenever they are initiated by third parties.

#### Role Attributes and the Effectiveness of Third Party Interventions

"Third party" refers to any official, group or agency not directly a participant to the conflict who may facilitate the resolution or control of conflict between the principals. In terms of bureaucratic positions, potential third parties include: a superior to both principals; a third official or agency which is a peer participant to the interagency effort in question; a separate unit formally assigned to coordinate the activities of the two principals; a consultant unit. These various types of role relationships represent ideal types--they are depicted in Figure 2.5. They will be discussed again later in this chapter. However, it should be emphasized here that we employ the third party in a wide context of organizational situations. For example, the third party concept is related to leadership, but not coincidental with it. The leader is one of several types of third parties available to play conflict management roles. And the conflict management role is just one of many roles required of the leader.

Figure 2.5.  
Role Relationships Between Third Parties and Principals



Several "role attributes" of the third party are proposed as factors which influence the effectiveness of the third parties' attempts to help in the constructive management of conflict. These attributes include: (1) professional expertise regarding social processes; (2) power over fate of principals; (3) control over procedure and the immediate setting in which interunit discussions occur; (4) knowledge about the substance of issues and about the principals to the conflict; and (5) degree of neutrality or balance in orientation towards the substantive outcomes and the conflicting principals.

Thus, the theory is comprised of the following basic variables: Third party characteristics can vary along five dimensions; the third party can employ any of five conflict management intervention strategies; and the third parties' interventions can vary in degree of effectiveness. The theory hypothesizes the relationship among these three types of variables. It is proposed that the existence of a certain role attribute (e.g., power over fate of principals) will enhance the effectiveness of a certain intervention strategy (e.g., to resolve directly a substantive issue in dispute), but will decrease the effectiveness of another intervention strategy (e.g., to help the parties change their conflict-prone relationship via sociotherapy).

The following findings emerged from a previous study of third party efforts to facilitate the development of a less conflictful relationship.<sup>7</sup> The earlier study illustrated our fifth type of intervention, namely to change the relationship via sociotherapy. The following five role attributes were generally found to be optimum for this type of intervention: (1) high professional expertise regarding social processes; (2) low power over fate of principals; (3) high control over confrontation setting and processes; (4) moderate knowledge about the principals, issues and background factors; (5) neutrality or balance with respect to substantive outcome, personal relationships, and conflict resolution methodology.

The following reasoning explains the relationship between these attributes and effectiveness in sociotherapeutic interventions:

1. The relevance of high professional expertise is obvious in the types of diagnosis, behavioral interventions, and emotional support and reassurance required of the third party.
2. The disadvantage of high power over the fate of the principals derives from the tendency of power to inhibit candid interchanges and induce approval-seeking behavior by participants.
3. The advantage of high control over process is that it allows the third party to take advantage of the tactical opportunities presented by such factors as physical setting, time boundaries, pacing, composition of group, agenda, etc.

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<sup>7</sup>Walton (25).



4. At least moderate knowledge about the principals, issues and background is usually an advantage because it enhances the third party's credibility with principals and increases the likelihood that his interventions will be on target.

5. Basic third party neutrality with respect to the substantive issues, the personal relationships with the principals, and the conflict resolution methodology facilitates the development of principals' trust toward him.<sup>8</sup>

The above propositions, which tend to be supported by the previous research, are shown in Table 2.1 among the hypotheses that comprise the theory as it was tentatively formulated for the present study. We can briefly review the reasoning relating role attribute configurations to the other interventions.

The first intervention strategy--to reduce conflict potential--often involves making basic changes, such as those that would modify the division of labor, the allocation of authority, the system of rewards, and performance criteria, and so on. Only powerful third parties can make such structural changes, and they can do so effectively only if they have moderate to high knowledge of the conflict issues frequently encountered and understand the motivation and capabilities of the parties. The other three role attributes don't appear relevant to the capacity of a third party to modify structural determinants of conflict.

In the second type of intervention--to directly resolve issues in dispute--the third party is concerned with the substance of the issues. He decides in his own mind how the issue should be resolved and then either makes the decision or actively influences others who will make the decision. Thus, it is essential that he have high knowledge of the issues and be familiar with the conflict participants involved--if his intervention is to result in an effective resolution of the issue. He needs high power if he is to make the decision himself, and at least moderate power if he is to be effective in influencing the decisions of others. The parties themselves are more likely to accept his recommendations on the issues if they perceive his predisposing orientation to the issues to be intermediate between those of the conflicting principals. And even when he has the power to make the decision himself, his decision is less likely to be resisted by one or both parties if they perceive him as relatively neutral and objective in his relations to them. Substantive interventions by high power third parties may create "win-lose" reactions on the part of subordinates, especially if this action on the issue does not reflect some unique knowledge to which he has access.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 150-151.

Table 2.1  
Hypothesized Role Attributes that Enhance Effectiveness  
of Different Intervention Strategies

Types of Interventions	Role Attributes of Third Party				Neutrality or Balance in Orientation
	Process Expertise	Power over Fate of Principals and/or Structure	Control over Interaction Process of Principals	Knowledge of Issues and Principals	
#1 Reduce Conflict Potential	N/A	High Power	N/A	Moderate to High Knowledge	N/A
#2 Directly Resolve Issue in Dispute	N/A	Moderate to High	N/A	High	High Neutrality
#3 Help Principals Manage Manifest Conflict	Moderate to High Expertise	Low	High Control	Moderate	High
#4 Help Principals Change Relationship, via Task Activities	Moderate to High	Moderate	High	Moderate to High	High
#5 Help Principals Change Relationship, via Diagnostic Insight and "Working Through"	High	Low	High	Moderate	High*

\* As an exception, when two principals are unequal in power, the third party may be more effective if his relations with them are asymmetric.

N/A - Not especially applicable

In the third intervention strategy--to facilitate the parties' own efforts to manage a particular conflict--the third party acts on the processes of conflict and conflict management. Therefore the most essential attribute is high control over the procedure and setting in which interunit interactions occur. It is hypothesized that neutrality will enhance the principals' acceptance of third party influence over their process. The third party needs some knowledge of the substantive issues in order to make timely and appropriate interventions regarding the process, but certainly not as much knowledge as is required to exercise direct influence on the substance of issues. He needs at least moderate process expertise if he is to know when the parties should be brought together and when their contacts should be buffered, if he is to know when and how issues are to be surfaced and with what pace they should be explored. It is often an advantage not to have high formal power over the fate of the principals; otherwise, the third party's own influence may be to compound the principals' sense of risk in the conflict setting and inhibit their efforts to confront issues.

The fourth type of intervention involves the use of task activities to move a relationship toward a new equilibrium in which there is less emotional conflict and an improved capacity to solve differences. The ability to conceive and initiate interunit tasks requires at least moderate knowledge of what joint activities will produce what types of attitude change (hence the importance of process expertise); and what issues are inherent in various joint tasks (hence the importance of knowledge of issues and principals). Equally important, initiation and continuation of task activities in a way most conducive to changing the relationship is possible only if the third party can legitimately and effectively exercise high influence over setting, membership, agenda, and meeting time; that is, he needs high control over process. Sometimes, but not always, the appropriate task interaction can only be arranged through some structural modification. The more the designer of joint tasks is seen as neutral on important issues that divide the parties, the more willingly will participants enter into these tasks, and the more likelihood of genuine attitude change.

We return to a consideration of the four types of role relationships diagrammed in Figure 2.5, and will discuss the role configurations typically associated with them. Superiors are the only third parties likely to have the organizational power to reduce conflict by restructuring the bureaucracy (intervention 1), although the superior sometimes lacks the requisite information base or diagnostic framework by which to assess the dysfunctional consequences of conflict and the basic underlying causes. Typically, the superior has high control over process and possesses at least moderate knowledge about the issues and the conflict principals. He may or may not possess process expertise and may or may not be balanced in his orientation. Thus, by reference to hypotheses summarized in Table 2.1, one can derive the further hypothesis that superiors are least likely to use effectively interventions 3 and 5, both of which are handicapped by his high power.

The superior's effectiveness with intervention 4 is likely to hinge on the degree of his process expertise and neutrality.

The peer's chief role assets for third party work typically would be neutrality, moderate knowledge of the issues and principals, and low power. By themselves, these would tend to qualify a peer unit to make interventions 3 and 5, but too frequently peers don't also have the control over and expertise in interaction settings that are also requisites to effective implementation of these two interventions. The low power of peers makes interventions 1, 2, and 4 also relatively unavailable to them.

Coordinative units which are specifically assigned the task of coordinating two or more other units within an organization typically have balanced (or intermediate) orientation, high substantive knowledge, and moderate organizational power (relative to the basic departments). Often they have some control over interactions, but don't necessarily have process expertise. Consistent with the purpose for which they are typically created, their most frequent and effective interventions are to type #2--directly influencing the resolution of issues.

The organizational consultant lacks the superior's power to modify directly the conflict potential factors or to decide the substantive issues in dispute. He usually lacks the requisite substantive knowledge as well. He may be in a position to influence the interaction processes. This is true to the extent that the consultant is perceived to have little or no preference regarding the outcome of a dispute, to have both objectivity and expertise which make him a fruitful source of diagnostic insight, to be non-evaluative, to be a source of emotional support, and to have high skills in facilitating interaction processes. The consultant can be used first to help the subordinate departments identify the organizational factors contributing to the conflict. Then in association with organizational changes designed to reduce conflict potential, the consultant third party can facilitate the change in actual relationships.

The superior, peer, coordinator, and consultants, as depicted in Figure 2.5 and as characterized by role attribute profiles in the foregoing discussion, represent types frequently encountered in intraorganizational settings.

Some of the third parties found in the interagency setting and reported upon in Part II will approximate these types, but just as many will illustrate a mixture or hybrid of types. For example, State Department officials sometimes have authority and responsibility regarding the activities of other agencies that contain elements of both the role relationships of a superior and a coordinator.

### Concluding Comment

The general flow model includes many parts, each related to a different aspect of an integrative effort. The second theory focuses more narrowly on a part of the model--on emergent interagency processes and purposive interventions. The dynamics comprehended by the theory are not all of the processes manifested in an interagency exercise or project but the theory was assumed to treat interagency processes that were strategic to the achievement of integrative results or the failure to achieve integration. Similarly, the third party focus represents only one way to treat interface management activities, but we regard it as significant, especially in its potential.

The case studies do not provide for a systematic test of the validity of the theories, but they afford some test of the heuristic value of the theoretical frameworks and some anecdotal support for or negation of the hypotheses. The theoretical concepts and propositions presented here will be illustrated throughout the case studies. In Part III we will attempt to evaluate the validity of the theories in this setting. Since in each case the frameworks and hypotheses were generated in an institutional setting other than interagency communities, we expect that the frameworks will require some modification in light of the empirical findings.

PART II

## CHAPTER 3

### COORDINATION IN THE OVERSEAS MISSION

The first of our studies treats interagency coordination in the overseas mission. After presenting general background on the problem, it focuses on a study of the United States mission to Brazil.<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction - The Overseas Mission

The United States foreign policy organization with its Washington and field components does not separate neatly into policy-formulation and policy-implementing functions. As the authoritative reporter and interpreter of the local situation, the overseas mission provides key inputs to the policy-making process; in some circumstances these inputs virtually predetermine policy decisions. Similarly, policies can involve implementing action either in Washington (as in the case of statements by Washington officials), but much of the responsibility for implementation does rest with the overseas mission. One observer has described some aspects of policy implementation overseas and the resulting importance of interagency coordination in the mission:

U.S. policy implementation overseas, particularly in the less developed areas of the world, has at least two distinguishing characteristics. It is highly operational, and the operations must often be carried on across the barrier of deep-rooted cultural differences. In addition to the usual government-to-government relations, the United States is in many places actively and deeply involved in the socio-economic and political-administrative life of these nations, participating and assisting in what are often fundamental processes of social change.

With all of Washington's help (and, field personnel would say, interference), this is essentially the field's job. It is in fact the essence of the field's job. However closely supervised from Washington, the field missions are for most purposes most of the time the primary implementer of U.S. policy and purposes abroad. The critical questions are, first, how

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<sup>1</sup> This study was based on interviews with members in the U.S. mission in Rio, during November 1966.

effectively the individual programs and functions are performed and, second, how systematically they are viewed, directed, and carried out in relation to one another and to a guiding set of U.S. objectives.

...effective performance in the field depends on the tying together of the various U.S. programs and activities in a particular country so that their relationships are recognized and exploited and all of them reflect U.S. policy purposes clearly and consistently. This is not just a problem in the less developed areas. In most countries, U.S. official representation is variegated enough to make this a meaningful requirement and concern. Many executive orders have been issued on this subject, many hopes have been expressed, and indeed, many cliches uttered. The requirement is, nevertheless, a real one.

The congeries of agencies and people that represent the United States and carry out its policies abroad should have a keen awareness of related activities being carried on by their colleagues and a concern to increase their combined effectiveness; senior officials, including but by no means limited to the Ambassador, should recognize the desirability of cohesive and consistent implementation of U.S. policy objectives. The concept of the "Country Team" is an attempt to give dramatic expression to this requirement. It is complementary to the notion of the leadership role of the Ambassador.

It is relatively easy to establish these premises. It is a lot more difficult to translate them into appropriate organizational arrangements, planning and programming procedures, and personnel skills.<sup>2</sup>

In relation to this, the role and authority of the ambassador has been an evolving one, changing as a function of the size and complexity of the overseas mission.

In the postwar years the United States greatly expanded its overseas operations. Alongside the old diplomatic missions, large, semi-independent organizations for economic and military aid and cultural and information programs grew up. Labor, Agriculture and other agencies sent representatives abroad. American military bases and installations, with sizable American forces, were established in many countries. Many of

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<sup>2</sup> Sapin (17), pp. 249-251.



these organizations and representatives had their own lines of reporting to Washington and had statutory<sup>3</sup> authority and responsibilities defined by Congress.

In practice the overseas officials of other agencies acknowledge the ambassador's position as chief of mission, but their willingness to accept his operational leadership varies from agency to agency, and country to country.

A military assistance advisory group (MAAG), for example, which is deep in operations and has its own reporting line to the Pentagon, does not welcome an Ambassador stepping between it and the Pentagon on matters of budget, program, personnel, or operations. The political counselors and other members of the diplomatic staff, however, have no line of reporting except through the Ambassador; they are fully dependent on him, and naturally have great interest in supporting him. Other elements fall somewhere between these two positions. USIS is closer to the diplomatic position, while CIA comes closer to the MAAG position, and AID is somewhere in the middle.

Important elements of our major missions thus look beyond the Ambassador to intermediate headquarters or Washington for guidance, support, and staff,<sup>4</sup> and their loyalties tend to run in the same direction.

During the 1950s and early '60s, a succession of Presidents have tried to strengthen the ambassadorial role. The most significant effort of this type was an oft-quoted letter of President Kennedy, dated May 29, 1961, and addressed to each chief of mission, excerpted here:

In regard to your personal authority and responsibility, I shall count on you to oversee and coordinate all the activities of the United States Government in...

You are in charge of the entire United States Diplomatic Mission, and I shall expect you to supervise all of its operations. The Mission includes not only the personnel of the Department of State and the Foreign Service, but also the representatives of all other United States agencies which have programs of activities in.... I shall give you full support and backing in carrying out your assignment.

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<sup>3</sup> "Basic Issues" (30), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> "The American Ambassador" (29), p. 64

Needless to say, the representatives of other agencies are expected to communicate directly with their offices here in Washington, and in the event of a decision by you in which they do not concur, they may ask to have the decision reviewed by a higher authority in Washington.

However, it is their responsibility to keep you fully informed of their views and activities and to abide by your decisions unless in some particular instance you and they are notified to the contrary.

If in your judgment individual members of the Mission are not functioning effectively, you should take whatever action you feel may be required, reporting the circumstances, of course, to the Department of State.

In case the departure from...of any individual member of the Mission is indicated in your judgment, I shall expect you to make the decision and see that it is carried into effect. Such instances I am confident<sup>5</sup> will be rare.

President Kennedy's letter gave specific treatment to the relationship between the military and the foreign affairs mission:

As you know, the U.S. Diplomatic Mission includes service attachés, military assistance advisory groups, and other military components attached to the Mission. It does not, however, include U.S. military forces operating in the field where such forces are under the command of a U.S. area military commander. The line of authority to these forces runs from me, to the Secretary of Defense, to the Joint Chiefs of Staff<sup>6</sup> in Washington and to the area commander in the field.

It is against this background that we can view the U.S. mission to Brazil in the late Fall of 1966.

#### Potential Interdependence among Agencies in the Mission to Brazil

The foreign affairs community in Brazil represented a reasonably large and very complex system. A table drawn up by the Embassy for March, 1966, showed about 1,500 American personnel in approximately 15 different agencies. For our purposes in examining the problem of coordination, the most important agencies are State (175 personnel),

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<sup>5</sup> As reprinted in Sapin (17), p. 255.

<sup>6</sup> As reprinted in "Basic Issues" (30), pp. 15-16.

AID (235), Joint Military Commission (150), USIS (50), Peace Corps (30, excluding volunteers), and Service Attachés (36).

The composition of the community is diverse. The size of the agency units in Brazil ranges from a very few persons to several hundred. In addition, the internal structures of these agencies are quite varied, ranging from the volunteer-oriented structure of the Peace Corps to the heirarchical ambassador-oriented organization of the State Department.

As reported above, the ambassador is expected to create, maintain, and utilize a "country team" comprised of the traditional diplomatic missions as well as the many large, semi-independent organizations which administer economic and military aid and cultural and information programs. But what is the necessity for "team work" in the mission to Rio, in particular? What type of coordination is desirable?

The agencies or offices in the mission to Brazil were dependent upon each other in many different ways.

Open Information Flow for Policy Formulation. In order to have the most appropriate, comprehensive overall set of U.S. goals and policies regarding the host country, each office or agency must be tapped for its unique knowledge and insight into Brazil's political, military, commercial, labor and other social institutions and conditions. It is also desirable to have up-to-date feedback on the many U.S. programs in Brazil. The political counselor had the responsibility for the coordination required to formulate the annual country policy statement.

The quality of this annual statement was in part a function of the quality of liaison and coordination provided by the Political Counselor and the Office of the Chief of Mission. Moreover, the extent to which the policy statement was accepted and used as a guide for program decisions and other decisions by the various agencies in part depended upon the extent to which these agencies were given an opportunity to influence the policy statement.

Open Influence System for Development Planning. The particular way U.S. funds are made available and utilized in development planning is strategic to the realization of the overall political objectives set forth in the policy statement. For example, AID funds were key ingredients in implementing a policy of financial stabilization, economic development and institutional reform in Brazil.

Important decisions determined the composition of U.S. resource input in terms of program loans, project loans, dollar grants, and Food for Peace: how these resources were to be allocated among various types of projects and programs; and what types of conditions and constraints were to be placed on the use of these resources in order to assure their maximum effectiveness. These preferences were set forth in a letter submitted to the Brazilian government for negotiation, and eventually became incorporated in the framework of the regional development program. In the opinion of some persons, these negotiations with the Brazilian

government over development planning represented the main leverage available to the U.S. for influencing Brazilian policy decisions, economic and political.

The development planning function, which is greatly dependent upon macroeconomic analysis, was centered in the AID Office for Development Planning. The way in which other offices could influence this process is unclear. On the one hand, as a result of certain initiatives by an official from one of the smaller mission components, he was able to exercise significant influence last year. On the other hand, it was reported that a senior state officer "didn't even see the letter," presumably before it had been sent to the Brazilian government.

The development planning process should provide for multilateral problem solving and bargaining that includes AID, the Political Counselor, and the other non-AID agencies and officers who are concerned. It did not occur to a large extent and there were important discrepancies between U.S. policy statements and the major way in which they were implemented.

Allowing for Influence Over Program Decisions. The programs that agencies draw up for the following year might have implications for other agencies. This was especially true of AID programs where funds could be related to almost every aspect of the Brazilian society which were also the special interests of particular agencies--Agriculture, Health, Labor, etc. Thus, the allocations of AID funds among these sectors and the format of individual projects within a sector could be of crucial importance to other agencies. One officer indicated that when he knew where decisions about operational programs were initiated and finalized, then he knew where policy was actually made. Thus, the AID program officer was in a key position. An officer illustrated this point by describing how he had successfully persuaded AID to target over \$100,000 to a new education project that he believed to be the first of its type in the country and in the region. He indicated he was able to achieve this through personal initiative despite the absence of any formal mechanism for such influence.

Providing Approval. In some instances, one agency was required to secure the approval of another agency before it could take action. For example, the ambassador has to approve an agency's program proposals and personnel assignments to his country by other agencies. Most cablegrams to Washington were cleared through the Office of the Chief of Mission.

Providing Guidance. The political section frequently provided guidance to USIS upon request. Apparently this section had been somewhat less successful in being seen as a source of guidance by other agencies. According to one officer it would have been desirable to have more active interchange between several sections of the Embassy and those responsible for the many human resource programs in AID.

Providing Information. Many an agency is not in a position to gather directly all the information that it needs for its own decisions or for which it must report to Washington. Its own work can be facilitated if it can get assistance from other agencies who have more direct access to

the needed information. To cite three instances mentioned in the interviews: USIS was a source of information for the political section of State; AID could have been a source of information for the economic section, which had a reporting function to other Washington agencies, but several people indicated the level of cooperation was not as high as it might be; there was a two-way flow of information between the Agricultural Attachés' office and AID Rural Development Office.

There was still another type of interdependence, one which did not present any problems to the agencies involved. USIS liked to have news material on Peace Corps and on AID because this material usually advanced USIS objectives and because it usually appealed to public interest. For their part the Peace Corps and AID both were pleased with the publicity.

Providing Expertise. An agency may need some technical expertise not available on its own staff, expertise which exists somewhere in the foreign affairs community. Many arrangements have been worked out to meet these needs, although there may be potential for many more; for example, the Labor Attaché also serves on the AID staff as a labor specialist; and AID provides Peace Corps with technical assistance in agriculture.

Collaborative Programs. In some instances, two agencies had complementary resources, skills or opportunities which could be combined in the same general program. This required preliminary negotiation of goals and their respective roles in the program in question. It also required continuous coordination of implementation activities. Three examples: USIS provided textbooks, which were distributed by Peace Corps volunteers; Peace Corps volunteers worked in association with the AID school lunch program; Peace Corps volunteers used AID work program food as a form of compensation in their community development efforts.

Drawing Upon Common Services. Agencies draw upon the same administrative services supplied by State paying for them on a pro-rata basis. They all use the same message center and can use embassy vehicles. Although this is a form of interdependence, it does not require any active coordination on the part of the various agencies.

### Contextual Forces in the Interagency Community Overseas

#### Centripetal Forces

Several factors contribute centripetal tendencies in the overseas mission. For example, each type of potential interdependence discussed above represents a value which would accrue to the mission as a result of interagency coordination activities; these interdependencies represented recognizable, albeit not especially potent, incentives for individual agencies to cooperate with each other. Other environmental factors make additional contributions toward coalescence: e.g., being geographically isolated in a foreign land, sharing many of the same economic and social hardships, and experiencing some common political-career risks. As we shall see, these tendencies are generally neutralized by many different types of centrifugal forces.

### Centrifugal Forces

The Symptoms of Low Coordination are not Compelling. There is little sense of coherence, unity, and relatedness among the various agencies and activities in the foreign affairs community. The agencies do not depend upon common sources of funds. With a few exceptions, they each have their own operational programs and objectives. Moreover, the underlying goals which an agency does share with the other U.S. agencies are frequently stated so abstractly that they do not contribute any force toward coalescence. Although there is the potential for cooperation, agencies' programs generally do not explicitly require much coordination.

Frequently, not obvious problems manifest the lack of coordination. To a large extent, each agency has its own goals and the resources to perform adequately without relating to other agencies. This condition distinguishes the interagency community from most organizational systems, where various efforts must be coordinated in the production and delivery of some product or service, and where faulty coordination is reflected in low quality or delays. Often agencies lacked appreciation of what they could offer each other. This appeared to be an element limiting the coordination or collaboration between many pairs of activities including reporting and program implementation, political policy formulation and economic program design, and Peace Corps program activity and AID program activity.

In some cases, one encounters a persistent narrowness in an official's conception of his job. For example, a political officer was described as not especially interested in directly influencing the obviously relevant decisions regarding AID programs. It was explained that he was not very flexible, indicating either the lack of organizational skill or conceptual adaptiveness.

The above explains, in part, why there are not greater pressures for some particular level of coordination. Below we suggest that any efforts to coordinate must deal with important fears, concerns and antagonisms.

Antagonisms. Many stereotypes were encountered in the U.S. Mission in Rio. For example, the State Department is sometimes seen as overly sensitive, rank conscious and presumptive about their assumed monopoly on knowledge about Brazil, whereas the USIS was described as more free swinging, more apt to say what it thinks no matter what the official policy is.

In addition, comparisons are made between groups in terms of who gets what rewards and privileges. AID personnel frequently have been advanced more rapidly and therefore have higher salaries than personnel with the same years of experience in State. Frequently a state official could cite an instance where he knew a young man "several years my junior who was first turned down by State, but subsequently hired by AID and now makes more than I do." In addition, the AID official probably had a position which involved managing more money and carried more responsibility. Thus state personnel often felt an injustice: State is assumed to be a super-ordinate agency in foreign affairs, its selection standards are presumed

to be the highest, it has the most tradition, and yet on a man-to-man comparison with AID, State Department personnel felt less rewarded.

For their part, AID personnel felt equally strongly about the injustices they experienced. One anecdote illustrates the feelings of one AID official about the State-AID relationship. President Johnson sent to Latin America a star-studded delegation comprised of prominent Senators and Representatives. The State Department organized a reception at the airport for this delegation which was traveling in Air Force Number One. Who was invited to the reception?--Foreign Service Officers and only a very few AID people, who were, moreover, placed at the low status end of the line, "below the lowest Foreign Service Officer." This obviously hurt! And it was reported to be symbolic of the way personnel in AID were treated with respect to important ceremonial or organizational privileges. Other anecdotes related the insulting experiences that wives suffered because their husbands were not Foreign Service Officers.

Even though there was not a fixed amount of foreign affairs dollars available to a country and allocated among agencies, some agencies were resentful for "less effective use of limited U.S. dollars for overseas activities." This type of resentment was expressed toward the military in several cases and toward the Peace Corps in one instance. A related resentment involved the number of American personnel in an agency located in Brazil. There was concern about too large a U.S. "presence." Thus again the military was resented by some for the size of their contingent in Brazil and the amount of a limited U.S. presence they "used up."

The several types of intergroup attitudes described above tended to inhibit interpersonal contacts across agency lines. Where contacts occurred because of accident or some coordinative responsibility, stereotypes tended to break down; but there still was the tendency to regard that particular person involved as "different from the others." Moreover, apart from the stereotypes, there were very important social and organizational realities underlying the other feelings of exclusion, jealousy and resentment described above. Man-to-man collaboration across agency boundaries did not erase or even dissipate the latter feelings; in fact, the contacts tended to intensify the feelings; therefore, these transactions can be said to have occurred despite the feelings.

Thus, we find certain paradoxes. On the one hand, unfavorable intergroup stereotypes tend to break down as a result of increasing the interpersonal exposure of members of the two agencies. Coordinative committees, social encounters, as well as experiences such as laboratory training, all work to eliminate stereotypes as a barrier. On the other hand, the status incongruity between Foreign Service Officers, and AID officials, for example, tends to become more intensely felt as a result of increased integration of their respective activities. Similarly, the great variety of privileges, pay and allowances which exists in the foreign affairs community creates greater friction as the parts of foreign affairs are pulled closer together. The feelings generated by these inequities can be handled within any given interpersonal relationship, but only if there are enough other bonds between the persons involved.

Fears - Associated with Interagency Transactions. Perhaps the most potent active forces against closer collaboration in the U.S. Mission in Rio were the concerns and fears of personnel about the possible additional, longer-range consequences for their respective agencies. At stake for the agency is its own uniqueness--in identity, philosophy, and organizational career lines. An official may ask himself, if organizational career lines are merged or blurred, how well can I compete with personnel from the other agency? If separateness of identity and programs is sacrificed, will our agency be exploited? An agency wants credit for what it does. The Peace Corps, for example, preferred to have those projects or programs in which its resources were employed identified as a "Peace Corps project." AID has the same preference. This factor tended to make collaborative programs somewhat less appealing.

Peace Corps, and to a certain extent AID, preferred to be generally dissociated from certain other agencies in the foreign affairs community. As a Peace Corps official said,

To the extent that the Peace Corps becomes identified as an arm of the U.S. Embassy, it loses its unique approach to the people. So far the Brazilian people see us as apolitical and not part of the foreign policy establishment.

Program collaboration which emerges from interagency negotiations freely entered into by autonomous agencies is one thing, but at least one agency was concerned about collaboration being forced by the Office of the Chief of Mission. Referred to as a "shotgun marriage," the recent increase in collaboration between the Peace Corps and AID had some of this flavor, although they subsequently became reasonably amenable to entering into some collaborative arrangements with each other. However, in another instance, someone had proposed collaboration between Peace Corps and the military, which was strenuously resisted by the Peace Corps. A Peace Corps spokesman said "I believe our position on this issue is appreciated here but if the Ambassador were both dynamic and not sensitive to this issue, we would have something to be very concerned about." Peace Corps officials believed that the ready, willing and able human resource represented by the volunteers would be exploited by AID and other agencies if given the opportunity.

If an agency enters into collaborative arrangement, freely or under pressure, the agency may begin to be pressured to engage in its own lower priority programs. The Peace Corps again provided an illustration. The Peace Corps in Brazil placed highest priority in basic community development work, but they were being pressured to enter into programs to eliminate production bottlenecks. They regarded the latter as symptoms rather than basic factors, but nevertheless found themselves responding to the pressure from AID and the Office of the Chief of Mission.

Two more immediate concerns were associated with interagency coordination. The first was that when one office (e.g., AID Rural Development)



contacted another office for "guidance" (e.g., political section of State) the first official would get more advice than wanted, referred to as "quarter-backing." In addition to providing the AID man with the proper political context, the political officer would make judgments on other aspects of the program which the AID man believed were a matter of choice within his own realm. The second was that when an agency engaged in coordination with other agencies, the details of the program involved were more likely to come to the attention of the Office of the Chief of Mission and consequently, the agency representative would get closer supervision than he preferred.

In U.S. missions in Latin America, State and AID have been partly integrated. There has been a redistribution of the functions performed by the State economic section and AID in the mission to Brazil. This has been experienced as demanding and perhaps threatening. From the way in which several officers expressed themselves, it was clear that the integration of formerly separate activities had been at some substantial emotional cost to them. Also they doubted that this new work would be relevant for their future promotions or assignments.

There was great resistance on both sides to having a State Foreign Service Officer report to (and receive performance reviews from) AID officials and vice versa. This resistance in part related to the assumption that they were still in separate career lines and still rewarded for basically different types of activities. It related in part to the status incongruity mentioned in the preceding section. In some instances, integration of these reporting relationships was resisted by the personnel involved to the point where some were inclined to put their job on the line.

From the point of view of the individual agency, many of the fears, concerns and objections to closer collaboration are based on certain reality factors, although they may be exaggerated. For example, it is possible that an agency may become more visible and get unwanted advice, supervision, or controls. However, the advice may be good. It is possible that if one agency engages in a more open review of programs, it may be persuaded to depart from its own program priorities; on the other hand the more open influence system may enable the agency to persuade other agencies to change their priorities. Also, to the extent that in some instances the virtues of pluralism of philosophies outweigh the advantages of convergence of programs, an open, collaborative country team should be able to reach this conclusion: that the pluralism should be preserved at the expense of integration. Many persons interviewed did not perceive that a more integrated foreign affairs community would present new advantages and opportunities for them in terms of the unique interests of their own respective agencies. They did, however, appreciate the benefits to the foreign affairs community as a whole.

Administrative Obstacles. One important factor limiting coordination was the time involved. An attache reported spending one-fourth of his time attending seven interagency staff meetings each week. Another spokesman pointed out that they were thinly staffed and indicated that with the

present staff it was very difficult to find time to coordinate with other agencies. The point is a general one--it takes time to maintain interfaces and time was limited for everyone. However, a more specific time factor was the "too short" lead times given to agencies by Washington. Thus, one agency's deadlines for submission to Washington limited the amount of interchanges that could occur between that agency and other during the development of a document.

Roles, Mechanisms,  
and Other Factors Promoting Interagency Coordination

There was an impressive amount of potential benefits from interagency coordination, but just examining the contextual factors--the centrifugal forces would overwhelm the centripetal forces. Nevertheless, there existed in the United States Mission to Brazil a reasonable amount of interagency coordination. From discussions with officials in Washington, the author understood that the level of integration was regarded in this mission as relatively good. The integration which had developed appeared to result from the patterns of the ambassador and his staff assistant and other organizational devices discussed below.

The Ambassador's Role

In theory and in practice in Brazil, the Ambassador played a key role in ensuring the coordination occur. An interview with the Ambassador indicated how he handled differences and promoted integration of the foreign affairs effort.

The Ambassador mentioned his differences with another agency, but assured us that they were "straightened out now." We learned from other interviews what this meant. Apparently, a report had been sent to Washington without affording the Ambassador a prior opportunity to approve it. The Ambassador apparently was critical of specific parts of this report. As one informed person described the incident:

The Ambassador took [X Agency] to the mat. The effect was electric. It reminded me of the famous J. F. Kennedy telephone call to the desk officer inquiring what gift had been obtained for a visiting head of state. The voice came on the line "this is Jack Kennedy..." The desk officer responded "ho, ho, ho," but then learned it really was President Kennedy. After that there were many believers. The same thing happened here. When [X Agency] was pulled up short, there were many believers.

Not only did the Ambassador establish his own primacy over the agency but indicated that he now expected more collaboration between it and other agencies.

The Ambassador stressed the importance of dealing with issues sooner rather than later. "They can send any report they please to Washington, but it must come across my desk first. If I disagree, I want a chance to hit it on the head before it goes to Washington." He indicated that he thought a lot of differences could be ironed out that way.

The Ambassador noted that he feels free to go down into the ranks of an agency and get advice, opinions, etc. "If there is any army colonel whose ideas about the military assistance program differ from the general's, I want to know about it." He insists upon an atmosphere where he has direct access to the subordinate officials and where they have access to him. In a similar vein, he maintained direct contact with programs, not using the Deputy Chief of Mission as a buffer. "And if there are frictions, I want to know about them."

The Ambassador described a recent incident where he made it clear that he was prepared to "go to Washington" in an assertive way if that was necessary to achieve the kind of balance and integration among agencies he desired. This apparently involved his views of the desirable balance between military and economic aid.

Apart from the more or less stylistic elements of the Ambassador's influence over other agencies, it should be noted that he or his office must: approve all key appointments of agencies; and approve programs or policy statements of agencies, subject to appeal; clear outgoing messages.

#### Staff Assistant

A staff assistant, located in the Office of the Chief of Mission, played important roles in achieving coordination. The various functions he performed are set forth below. He was given high marks for his liaison skill by the Ambassador and others in the foreign affairs community.

The staff assistant served as "policy coordinator," following up on the implementation of decisions growing out of the country team meetings and other coordinative meetings.

It would appear that his approach to promoting coordination was through skillfully mentioning the Ambassador's interest in coordination; arranging for luncheons between himself and two people he would like to bring together; establishing relationships with key people in various agencies; taking a direct interest in the results of these coordinative meetings, receiving reports, keeping the Ambassador informed, and reinforcing the activity; being a consultant to, as well as an intermediary for, anyone wanting to make contact with someone in another agency; helping to screen out certain items and ensuring that others get to the Ambassador.

An important integrative device coordinated by the staff assistant was the "think tank." It was an informal weekly meeting of a group of broad-gauge thinkers drawn from many agencies. They gathered together on Monday evenings and attempted to think creatively about problems that were

of concern to the foreign affairs community as a whole. Members included officers from the Embassy, AID, the military and USIS. Many of them were young, bright and inclined to take a big-picture or generalist view of foreign affairs. This device seemed to be an important factor for those involved in building interagency bridges. Specific ideas born in the group were expected to result in new programs or other ventures.

#### Liaison Assignments, Joint Committees and Physical Proximity

The Ambassador had used the power of his office to make specific assignments which could lead to greater coordination. For example, a political officer states that his section was to assume increased responsibility for liaison and coordination on political matters. Also, an incident involving two agencies resulted in the establishment of a coordination committee between them. The Ambassador maintains a specific interest in the progress of this committee through a staff assistant who is closely following its activity. Apparently other coordinating arrangements involved additional agencies. In some cases, members of one agency served as staff for another agency. At least one USIS official was an integral member of the AID staff handling all information matters virtually as an insider. Similarly, the Labor Attache was a labor specialist on the AID staff and consequently exercised influence that was consistent with both AID objectives and the special interests of the Labor Attache.

A very important factor affecting the amount of interagency coordination was physical proximity of the individuals who ideally should interact. What is involved, for example, is the question of whether all staff in one agency should be located together or whether there should be some geographical distribution of those who must relate to each other across agency lines. A recent office reorganization had sought to bring together officers that must coordinate, regardless of their agency affiliation.

#### Interpersonal Familiarity

An important ingredient in many instances of interagency or inter-office coordination was interpersonal familiarity or friendship. One official had previously worked with the Ambassador and as a result felt freer to try to influence him. He also described two important interagency relationships as allowing for the proper amount of responsiveness, largely because he had established personal friendships with key individuals involved. The "think tank" resulted from a small friendship group of interagency composition; and in turn served to enlarge the interpersonal network.

#### The Results of Interagency Initiatives

The interviews were better at providing insight into elements affecting interagency collaboration than in providing a general assessment of the current level of collaboration. With respect to each of the types of collaborative potential, one could cite some illustrative achievement,

but usually the opportunity for greater coordination was more impressive than the achievements. Still, compared with other missions, the level of interagency coordination reportedly was well above average. The remarks by those interviewed provided other mixed indicators; for example,

We have our rivalries, but they are not acrimonious.

We don't have information restriction; but when it comes to sharing resources, this is where the problem arises.

I help them do their job; but they don't help me do mine.

Compared with other country teams I've know about, relations here are quite good.

The feelings here about being in or out of the [Foreign Service Officer] club are intense.

At the end of one interview, one person referred to having "poured my heart out" during the session. Another indicated he had had "a catharsis." This gives some further indication that some of the interagency feelings being discussed were intensely felt. There was no question but that there was room for improvement.

### Summary and Conclusions

#### Flow Model

The United States mission to Brazil illustrated significant possible benefits to be derived from interagency collaboration. The form of potential assistance ranged from information exchange, through mutual influence in decision making, to collaborative program activities. Few contextual factors worked to encourage members of the mission to exploit this potential; and they were more than offset by the forces limiting interagency coordination, which include agency concerns and fears, certain intergroup perceptions and feelings, and a few administrative costs and obstacles. Also involved is an "under-recognition of the problem of low coordination," which results from the unique nature of this social system. Thus, the steps taken to deliberately promote interagency coordination are quite significant. A strategic factor is the Ambassador's style and the techniques he uses to integrate foreign affairs activities. Playing a somewhat more informal but equally important role is the staff aide. Interagency exchanges are also provided by liaison assignments, joint committees, physical proximity and interpersonal familiarity.

#### Interaction Dynamics and Third Party Roles

Certain types of potential for interdependence could only be realized via joint decision making--especially development planning, AID program

decisions and collaborative program ventures. Both the quality and amount of multilateral problem solving and bargaining among agencies with a stake in the development planning process appeared to be adversely affected by the emotional dimensions of interagency transactions--examples of what we have referred to as identity conflict. The sources and forms of identity conflict operative in the Brazil mission included stereotypes, status incongruity, and concerns that an agency's identity would be blurred or contaminated. One device used to minimize the impact of identity conflict on the rational decision processes was to force potentially conflicting activities into a single role. Some officials were asked to take on joint or dual identities, e.g., the Labor Attache also served as the labor specialist on the AID staff. A USIS officer also occupied an AID position.

The Ambassador and the staff assistant both performed third party roles. Sometimes, of course, the Ambassador might be at odds with the official of another agency and therefore very much a participant to the conflict in question. But, at other times he and his staff assistant were working to resolve a particular difference between two other agencies or trying to improve the general level of cooperation between them.

The conclusions that emerge from the limited observation of the Ambassador and his staff aide are that their approaches were consistent with each other and were reasonably effective. Nevertheless, it should have been possible to extend the third party approach of the staff assistant and to have added to his repertory of third party skills. The staff assistant could have become a major agent of change assisting others in their development of the interpersonal and organizational skills required to establish interagency contacts, and to strengthen interagency relations.

There appeared to be other third party possibilities. Because this particular social system lacked obvious and demanding symptoms of inadequate collaboration and integration, it would be desirable to invent supplementary organizational or leadership devices which define and dramatize the collaborative potential. For example, one technique might involve the periodic use of behavioral science diagnosis and analysis similar to that contained in this report. With the authorization of the ambassador, a country team might use a third party consultant: to interview personnel within the key agencies; to report the findings to the country team; to assist the team in analyzing additional data and insights; to assure that the important issues are confronted and in a way not too threatening to the individuals concerned; to encourage the team to innovate procedures for increasing collaboration wherever appropriate; to assist the team in working through or managing any interpersonal issues within the team and in planning ways to improve interagency relations at subordinate levels.

Because of the positive role which interpersonal familiarity and friendship can play in interagency coordination, it would be desirable to create specific devices for developing interpersonal bonds among the key positions in interagency relationships. The relatively rapid and predictable turnover of personnel in an overseas agency makes it especially desirable to supplement the natural opportunities with some accelerating processes.

Here it is pertinent to point out that third party consultants (employing socio-therapeutic methods) have been used in industrial staff groups to accelerate the processes of acquaintance and building relationships (team building) where three factors existed: low day-to-day required interaction, high potential for strategic collaboration, and rapid turnover in that staff group.

Certain other conditions and attitudes in the overseas foreign affairs community are favorable to the development of a relatively collaborative country team, and make very appropriate the use of team-building sessions employing behavioral science techniques; (a) Some of the centripetal forces mentioned earlier are relevant here, e.g., members of the foreign affairs community share common living experiences and feel dissociated from the United States and other countries; they are geographically isolated and rely upon each other for social interaction. (b) The absence of incompatibility in operational goals makes further coordination possible; the absence of direct competition for funds or program approval is another facilitating condition for team building. (c) Individuals do have highly ambiguous tasks, minimum measures of effectiveness and non-obvious means of accomplishing goals; hence, the greater value in the sharing of perceptions and evaluations as well as specific information. (d) Members of the foreign affairs community have significant uncertainty about: what they are trying to do; whether it is what they ought to be trying to do; and whether they are being effective in what they are doing. For example, such doubts were expressed by the country team in another mission; those doubts led to crystallized statements of the kinds of information needed to clarify their objectives and strategies (what institutions, what people, what sector should they be working with). There is a real possibility that a quite different foreign policy strategy, unique to Brazil, might develop with the right kind of climate and social system in the foreign affairs community. This would require high collaborative feelings, willingness to share perceptions, information, doubts, concerns and responsibility. As we noted above, the "think tank" was a start in this direction, but could have been extended to a larger fraction of the key members of the mission.

## CHAPTER 4

## AN INNOVATIVE MECHANISM AT THE DESK LEVEL IN WASHINGTON

This chapter, like Chapter 3, treats interagency relations at the country level, but here we examine relations among Washington officials who specialize in the affairs of a particular country. The object of the study, the Brazil Interdepartmental Group (BIG), was an experimental effort in interagency leadership and community building in foreign affairs. It was chaired by the Country Director of the Office of Brazilian Affairs of the State Department and was comprised of representatives from about a dozen agencies--typically officials concerned with their respective agencies' activities in Brazil. In bureaucratic parlance, such an official is responsible for the Brazilian "desk" in his agency. The country director is the ambassador's counterpart in the Washington organization of the State Department. Thus, when formed into a group, they become a Washington counterpart to the country team in the overseas mission. BIG was launched in May 1966 and had been meeting approximately once a month when the study was conducted.<sup>1</sup>

BIG did not have any direct formal authority. It did not meet to formulate integrated foreign affairs policy. It did not in any systematic or explicit sense coordinate the constituent agencies' activities. Nor did it meet for the purpose of resolving outstanding differences among agencies. Finally, it was not a task force with a specific mission.

Nevertheless, BIG was one of those relatively few interagency mechanisms with an almost unanimous and enthusiastic endorsement. Why?-- because it currently provided its members with benefits that exceeded their costs, it added a significant centripetal force among Washington personnel concerned with Brazil. Therefore, BIG indirectly operated to promote interagency coordination, constructive resolution of differences and an integrated foreign affairs policy.

While the group currently achieved satisfying and important results through voluntary participation, information exchange, mutual education and attitude change, the chairman entertained the question whether this type of interagency group should become more of a formal problem-solving and action instrument in foreign affairs.

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<sup>1</sup>This study is based primarily on interviews with members of BIG and other officials in the Office of Brazilian Affairs in January 1967. Some additional material was generated in a BIG meeting by discussion of a draft report assessing their first seven months experience with the mechanism.



### Introduction - The Desk Level in Washington

Interagency coordination in the field of foreign affairs manifests itself in various forms at many levels. Overseas, the ambassador's "country team" had become a relatively accepted concept and often an effective mechanism. In March 1966 a presidential directive NSAM 341, established two high level interagency mechanisms with State Department officials serving as executive chairmen, i.e., with decision-making authority. An Interdepartmental Regional Group (IRG) exists for each regional bureau in the State Department, chaired by the bureau's Assistant Secretary of State. The highest level Senior Interdepartmental Group (SIG) is headed by the Under Secretary of State. These particular mechanisms had not received much test by early 1966 but the assumptions which underlie them are ones which persist and receive growing attention; namely, that more coordination and integration of foreign affairs activities is desirable for the United States and that officials in the State Department are expected to take leadership roles in this effort.

Also, in March 1966, the Department of State created a new position of country director. The Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual Circular #385, March 5, 1966 set forth the position as follows:

A new position of Country Director will be established in the regional bureaus to serve as the single focus of responsibility for leadership and coordination of departmental and interdepartmental activities concerning his country or countries of assignment. In particular he will:

- a. provide continuing departmental and interdepartmental leadership in planning, coordination, and implementation of decisions;
- b. raise specific matters for consideration by the IRG, and bring detailed knowledge to IRG discussions when so requested;
- c. serve as the base for crisis task force operations as necessary.

The Country Director will be responsible for seeing that the Ambassador's needs are served both within the Department and government-wide. He will ensure that the mission is fully supported in the full range of its requirements: policy, operations and administration.

Each Country Director will organize and develop such contacts, channels and mechanisms as are appropriate to and necessary for full interdepartmental leadership on country matters, and for full support to the Assistant Secretary.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual (315).

Thus, country directors were also expected to perform some inter-agency functions, but there was no formal provision for an interagency group with executive chairmanship at the country level in Washington comparable to either the overseas country team or the IRG and SIG. However, the Latin American IRG asked each country director to identify and list representatives from every agency with which his office dealt. These documents were then approved by IRG so that presumably an official interagency list existed for all country directors in Latin America. No systematic canvass was made of these country directors to determine precisely their respective practices in coordinating interagency affairs. However, the Office of Brazilian Affairs clearly had gone further than other offices in testing the value of an interagency group at this level.

Since we are focusing on a group which is the Washington counterpart to the country team in the U.S. Mission, some of our analysis in Chapter 3 is applicable here. Particularly relevant are the types of potential interdependence which exist among agencies and the forces that limit interagency coordination. Although most of the same types of potential interdependence and obstacles to coordination exist in the interagency network at the country level in Washington, they are somewhat weaker or less urgent than in the field. There were exceptions; for example Brazilian desk officers in the Washington agencies were physically more dispersed throughout the U.S. capital than their overseas counterparts were in Rio. In any event, the level of integration which typically obtains at the country level in Washington leaves enormous room for improvement and the prevailing force of the interagency environment works against integration.

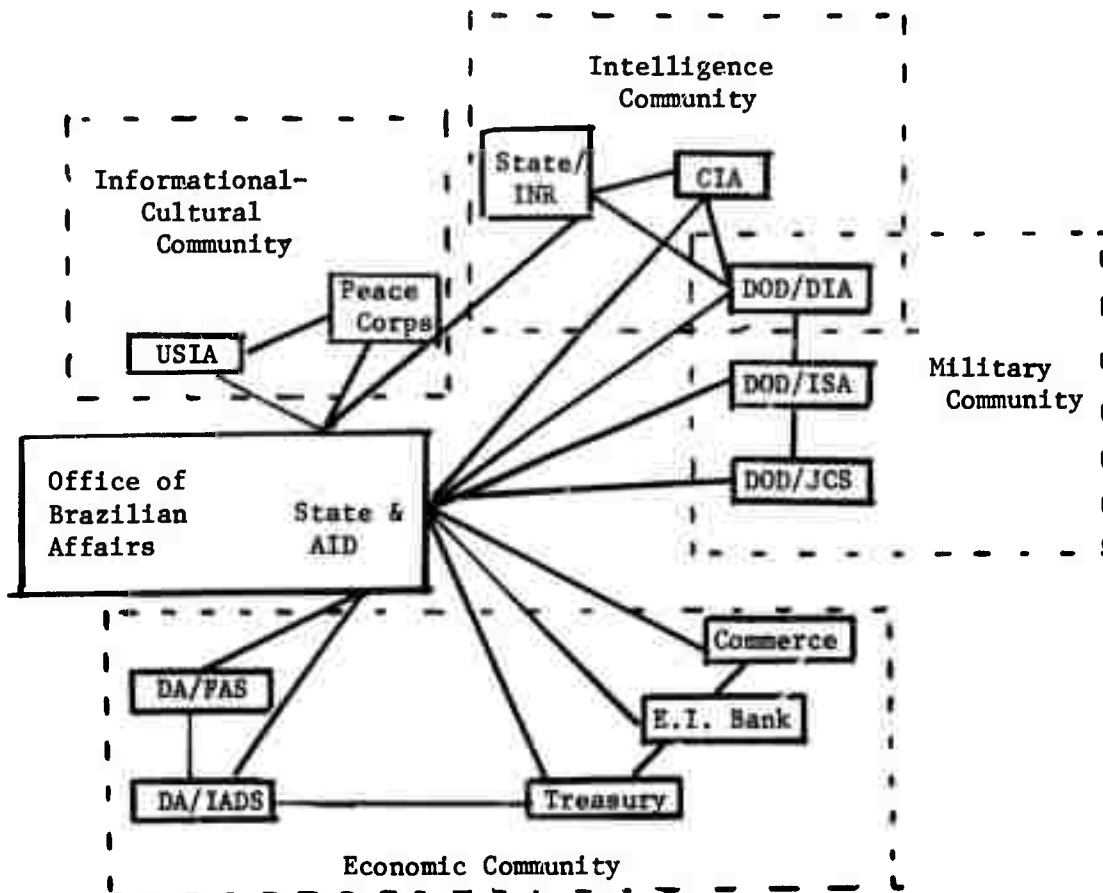
#### The Structure and Management of BIG

Fourteen agencies and/or separate functional offices were represented on BIG. Figure 4.1 depicts the functional interagency relationships which were reported to exist prior to the formation of BIG. There were a total of 22 relationships between pairs of offices which frequently had to coordinate activities, share information, or execute other types of inter-agency transactions. The Office of Brazilian Affairs handled the State-AID end of those transactions. Thus, although the Country Director represented the Office on BIG, his deputy and the top AID official in the Office of Brazilian Affairs also attended meetings.

Of the the other relationships shown on the chart, three involved an agency official other than the one who attended BIG; e.g., the INR member of BIG did not deal with the CIA official who attended the meetings; he dealt with a different CIA official. A similar situation existed in the Commerce-Treasury and IADS-Treasury relationships. Seven of these inter-agency relationships involved pairs where both persons are members of BIG.

BIG was comprised of at least three "communities": intelligence, military and economic. The USIA and Peace Corps might be characterized as a fourth "cultural-informational" community. Although not shown in the diagram, the AID side of the Office of Brazilian Affairs was clearly a member of the economic community. Note that interagency relations naturally tended to

Figure 4.1 - The Brazilian Foreign Affairs Community



Key:

USIA: United States Information Agency  
 State/INR: Department of State/Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
 DA/FAS: Department of Agriculture (service with responsibility for food sales and other agricultural concessions)  
 DA/IADS: Department of Agriculture/International Agriculture Development Service  
 E.I. Bank: Export-Import Bank  
 DOD/JCS: Department of Defense/Joint Chiefs of Staff  
 DOD/ISA: Department of Defense/International Security Analysis in the Office of the Secretary of Defense  
 DOD/DIA: Department of Defense/Defense Intelligence Agency in the Office of the Secretary of Defense

Note: INR, CIA and DIA are members of United States Intelligence Bureau;  
 Commerce, Treasury and EIB are members of National Advisory Council.

cluster within "communities"; and that any transactions outside the community involved the Office of Brazilian Affairs. For example, no normal functional relations existed between the economic community and the military or intelligence communities; and consequently, little or no dialogue occurred between them apart from the BIG development. Unless interagency contacts were required, they were unlikely to develop on their own because of physical distances separating offices in Washington, historical autonomy and separation, and different primary concerns.

Meetings of BIG had been held with reasonable regularity, approximately monthly, since May 1966, but only when and if there had been a definite occasion, such as the presence in Washington of a knowledgeable person from the mission in Brazil. Normally, meetings featured a main speaker who had unique information or experience and/or provocative views. These brief presentations were followed by questions and answers. In addition to topics presented by an outside speaker, discussion topics were initiated by the chairman and in a few cases, by other members.

Interviews with members of BIG suggested that the following were important characteristics of the way the chairman handled the meetings.

First, the chairman tried with apparent success not to dominate the discussion or regulate it with a heavy hand. Other members credit him with establishing a good framework to lead from one topic to another, using good judgment in making these transitions and doing so unobtrusively.

Second, the chairman encouraged participation from all members by specifically inviting comment or questions before a topic was dropped. Nevertheless, as several members observed, "a person can regulate his own participation according to his potential contribution and his own needs for information or ideas." The result was uneven participation.

Third, the chairman emphasized the importance of having the same person from an agency attend all meetings in order to build up interpersonal familiarity, trust, commitment and sense of membership. In the interviews, many members expressed firm intention and desire to attend all meetings, sending substitutes only if it was absolutely impossible to go themselves. Also to heighten the sense of membership, the chairman made special attempts to differentiate visitors from regular members, requesting regular members to sit at the table and encouraging them to participate. Visitors sat in observer roles.

Fourth, dissenting views were encouraged and sometimes solicited by the chairman and other members. An example of the type of differences which the group tried to sharpen rather than ignore was an interchange between those who, in trying to anticipate a given Brazilian official's policies, would stress his personality and those who would stress the nature of the problems he had to face.

Fifth, "it is important" that no minutes are taken in the meetings. One person believed this was a "passport for complete candor." While many shared this view, a few felt more constrained. Later we shall analyze these differing views of the perceived risks of certain types of participation.

### Benefits Derived from BIG

Members of BIG, including the chairman, were asked: "Does BIG perform any useful functions for you? If so, what are they?" Below is an analysis of their responses and some conclusions about the purposes currently served by BIG as it operated at the time of the study.

#### Information Exchange and Mutual Education

BIG provided a forum which accomplished a kind of interagency communication which did not otherwise occur. Most of the members emphasized the information and education they derived from the meetings. For example, they cited the paradox that with agency autonomy goes a certain isolation from other elements of the foreign affairs community; and then indicated that BIG helped overcome this dilemma by bringing them into contact with persons concerned with Brazilian affairs whom they would not otherwise meet.

A few stressed their improved opportunity to make an input into the policy-making process. One member stated:

This type of mechanism was long needed. I know, I've concentrated on Latin America and Brazil for 14 years. Then came the SIG and the IRG, which still didn't mean anything until the Office of Brazilian Affairs took the bull by the horn and made me a participant in the process. Prior to this development, I felt that I could not make a substantive input into U.S. foreign policy in areas where I had some long experience and some definite views.

Some of the unique characteristics of this information exchange system are discussed below.

Bridging Communities. BIG bridged several communities (or clusters) within the larger foreign affairs community. It was used as a mechanism for interchanges among the economic, military, and intelligence communities and the Office of Brazilian Affairs. As shown in Figure 4.1, there existed apart from BIG a substantial amount of communication within those clusters as a result of bilateral transactions or specialized coordinating groups such as the National Advisory Council. Thus, it is not surprising that members typically stressed the importance of the contributions of other members who belonged to a totally different part of the foreign affairs community. Consider two illustrative comments, the first from a member of the economic community and the second from the intelligence community:

What I'm getting out of it is a far better understanding of the political developments ... It's particularly helpful because we are small and don't have our own research organization.

I was very interested in learning from the economic community about the volume of U.S. investments waiting to flow into Brazil. Previously I had the feeling that there was not a significant amount of capital willing to flow into Brazil. I also gained other valuable specific details about this problem. This helps fill out my total picture of the Brazilian situation. It was also reassuring to know that there was international confidence—at least in the economic sense.

Obviously, in addition to the exchange of information described above, there was some attempt to synthesize or piece together the information. A member from an economic agency said: "We get reviews of the political conditions and economic conditions and reports from the military and we can then see the tie-in among these."

Almost all members found BIG useful in gaining a better understanding of U.S. foreign policy as reported by the chairman, and in particular, to learn his views. Usually this would have general value, but occasionally, it had more immediate action implications for a member.

Communicating Nuances. For a limited number of important topics, the meetings allowed for a more complete, higher fidelity type of interagency communications, including nuances of meaning, the feeling tone associated with views, and the degree of tentativeness with which positions were advanced.

As one person said, "In an informal meeting, you can say things--impressions and opinions--which you can't state in a formal report." The opportunity for this informal communication would appear to be especially important in bureaucracies, where in the words of one person "There is an incentive to say as little as possible in documents, other pieces of paper, and formal meetings. Here one can make less guarded statements with less risk of being embarrassed if a prediction doesn't come true or if a hunch proves wrong."

Several persons believed important additional information had on several occasions been produced because of the opportunity to probe. By talking in an informal meeting where some confidence and trust had developed, the others could ask discerning, probing, and challenging questions which would make the speaker both clarify his position and identify his supporting evidence.

The above aspects of more complete communication resulted because the information exchange was face-to-face, was not "for the record," and occurred in the context of growing interpersonal respect and trust.

Provocative of New Thinking. Members reported that the BIG meetings had a variety of types of constructive influences on their thinking about foreign affairs issues: challenging current assumptions, promoting broader perspectives and encouraging strategic and contingency planning. The remarks below are illustrative of these reactions:

Your eyes get opened up. Someone challenges with the assertion that we may be paying too much attention to the youth in Brazil. Even if he is just being a devil's advocate, that stimulates our thinking.

When you assume there is a general recession and then an informed person points out that you have to wait six weeks to get delivery on a car, it presses you to refine your thinking.

A few stressed the influence toward broader thinking:

I am involved in minute detail handling of day-to-day program matters. It's useful to be forced to think in broader terms.

I believe it impresses upon those from other agencies the breadth of State's view--it is broader than just political. I better appreciate the many factors that must be taken into account which are not of direct concern to others of us.

Constructive Mixture of Dissent, Challenge, Convergence and Assimilation of Viewpoints. This was probably more in potential than past consequences, but there appeared to be the ingredients of constructive and dynamic balance of disagreement and agreement.

Treasury spells out its views on a matter I have disagreed with; later I hear it sharply attacked and find that I tend to defend it.

With respect to the traditional Peace Corps-Military differences, although I can't document it, I somehow feel each has absorbed some of the other's point of view.

I hope that over time the [X] agency will come to better appreciate the potential role of the rural population in both economic and political arenas.

It may be useful to illustrate a few other differences in views among the agencies represented on BIG. State and AID encouraged the Export-Import Bank to make loans for political impact or for internal development whereas Export-Import Bank tended to take a more conservative view in judging the specific quality of the applicant exporter from U.S. or importer in the host country. AID invariably wanted the Bank to make more loans. For its part Commerce had typically urged the Export-Import Bank to proceed in a liberal way in order to promote U.S. exports. In contrast, the Federal Reserve and the Treasury were arguing against extending more credit. AID was more willing than Treasury for the United States to buy local currency to meet certain program costs in the host country; Treasury urged more strings on program loans requiring spending on U.S. items.

Constraints on Free Communication. Not all members felt free to express their views in this forum. Some of the members who acknowledged the value they received from the group meetings were reluctant to participate as fully as others. For purposes of contrast, first consider the view of an active member:

I feel no inhibitions in leveling with this group.  
If my superiors knew everything I said, they might cringe.  
But then, that's more or less my general style and they realize it.

But another member was constrained in participating in part because:

If I give an opinion, this agency is saying thus and so; it gets to my superiors and they come to me. I like to make statements only if I am already instructed on the matter.

Another member indicated two additional reasons why he was reluctant to make a presentation on a topic of concern to many other agencies and with broad implications for U. S. foreign policy with Brazil. First, "It would not be of direct interest to many members of BIG." Second, "We don't want to encourage new pressure from other agencies." He made an even broader statement, "I don't think that any of the policies we are involved in should be discussed in that group." Referring to a particular issue, he said, "This is hashed out on all levels with Agency B in a friendly dialogue."

Hopefully, the overall consequences of the discussion which does occur would be better forecasting, more willingness to challenge current assumptions, more creative thinking, more application of the other person's point of view and policies, and a better feedback on one's own policies.

#### Relationship Building

BIG has helped build relationships among its members which in turn facilitated bilateral and trilateral interagency transactions apart from the group.

Establishing Contacts. Attending the meeting with others created or reinforced a network of interagency contacts among those dealing with Brazilian affairs.

Becoming acquainted with personalities makes other phone calls later more likely, more efficient and more productive.

Because Brazil is a quiescent state as far as we are concerned, I don't have any other occasion to contact many people on BIG. If a crisis develops, I would be able to establish contacts readily.

Almost everyone could cite one or more relationships that have been created or in some way strengthened. A majority of the members reported



somewhat strengthened connection with State. In addition, among other agencies, four relationships were identified as strengthened; and four new relationships were cited. Three of these new relationships crossed the communities' boundaries shown in Figure 4.1.

Increased Respect and Confidence. There was evidence that the relationship-building role of BIG involved more than merely becoming personally acquainted. In many instances, the interchanges led to increased professional respect; and/or a greater confidence that there were truly shared goals among the many agencies which comprised the foreign affairs community. As a consequence, there was heightened responsiveness to another agencies' requests.

This has made the Country Director more accessible... brought him into our circuit. I believe he had developed an appreciation for what those of us at the Indian level have to contribute. My own confidence has developed. If he called me before, I would have been cautious, now I would do anything he asked of me.

I find that it has enhanced mutual trust and understanding so that when I might call another member and say there is a problem, but I need your concurrence, he is more likely to say put me down.

I am impressed by the number of people with an interest in Brazil; and with the calibre of these people. I am reassured about the extent to which we have common goals-- having Uncle Sam's best interest at heart. There are fewer differences than I have been led to believe from what I read.

By the same token, there was evidence that newly found respect was not a universal reaction. A few reactions were voiced and negative stereotypes persisted.

#### Enhances Sense of Reality and Importance of Brazil

A variety of comments suggested that BIG meetings had the following related effects for different members: (a) underscored the uniqueness and importance of Brazil for the United States; (b) rekindled involvement with Brazil for those who have been there several years ago; (c) increased the reality of Brazil for those who have never been there; (d) created esprit de corps among "Brazilianists." Illustrative comments follow:

The group, just by getting together, reinforces my view of the importance of Brazil to the United States. We know it can be and is the leader in Latin America.

It reinforces the feeling of entity of Brazil, rather than one's own function. I am the only one in this agency who thinks exclusively about Brazil. When I got over to the BIG meeting, I learn about Brazil from others who both know and care. Here there is not the interest in details.

### Aid of Members within Their Respective Agencies

Responses by those interviewed indicated that for some the BIG meetings had the effect of increasing their value, performance and perhaps influence within their respective agencies, both in Washington and with respect to their field counterparts.

Many, if not most, members briefed their superiors on important matters discussed in the BIG meetings, passing on the feeling and flavor as well as the essential content. By not only being more informed about an issue, but also being able to anticipate agreement or disagreement on the part of another agency, the members' ideas and recommendations carried more weight.

### Summary: Community Building

Figure 4.1 depicts interagency relations before May 1966. BIG was an effort at system building, creating a larger community embracing several clusters of agencies. Flowing between the personnel representing different communities was more information, more respect, more constructive challenges and more attempts at persuasion supported by direct experience or facts and analysis. Thus, a second diagram portraying the community of "Brazilianists" in January 1967 would show (a) additional emergent bilateral contacts between representatives of agencies from different subcommunities, e.g., intelligence and economic; (b) strengthened bilateral relationships where they existed before; (c) all of these agency representatives located within the BIG community.

### A More Potent Role for BIG

Members were invited to state their views regarding a more direct action and/or problem-solving role for BIG. What follows are the interview responses and analysis regarding the potential and limitations inherent in this type of interagency mechanism.

### The Country Director's Ideas

Several officials interviewed in the State Department expressed the hope and belief that an interagency group could be an effective and potent instrument at the country level. The chairman of BIG shared this ultimate objective, although he later recognized the factors which tend to limit the future of the group. He expressed his hopes and long-run expectations as follows:

First, in terms of the psychological nature of the group, he saw it currently as "incompletely coalesced." He said that most members were participating but hoped that all would become equally involved, and that the group would become a "unity."

Second, if the group were to develop satisfactorily along these lines, he said he wanted it "to become a problem-solving group. When I or someone else present a problem, we discuss it, and a solution emerges."

Third, he wanted it to be the key building block in Washington for policy making regarding Brazil. As an example of what he contemplated, he described a situation along these lines:

Most agencies prepare an annual budget as well as longer-run projections. The budgets must be related to the policy of the agency. Let's assume an agency presents a report on its goals and strategies for Brazil. The report has been worked over by both the field and the agency's staff in Washington. Now assume that the report is presented to BIG, and different views, based on additional Washington or headquarters considerations, are advanced by the diverse membership of this group; and that the group converges on somewhat different goals or strategies for that agency.

If the agency representative centrally involved in BIG got the acceptance of the revised program from the field and his superiors, then the group would have successfully performed an important policy-formulating role. However, if the other agency did not buy the BIG-recommended goals or strategies, then BIG's views would not prevail unless it had increased formal power. The logical consequence would then be to feed the disagreement up the line into the IRG-SIG system, in which case BIG would be playing a key role in identifying and surfacing for decision important policy questions on Brazil.

Fourth, the chairman also described a situation where BIG would share the policy-making influence which resides within the Office of the Country Director. He described some key alternative policy stances which State could take with respect to Brazil in the coming year. Each stance was appropriate depending in part upon certain assumptions one made and weights one assigned to different facts in the situation. He foresaw a group such as BIG having the potential to be very influential in his own recommendations on this type of matter.

Finally, the chairman had hoped that an "additional consequence of a productive, knowledgeable group would be an increased and more enlightened interest in Brazil on the part of departments and agencies with some involvement in foreign affairs. We need to get people at the assistant secretary level better informed on foreign affairs generally and on Brazil particularly."

#### Member Responses

Members were interviewed and asked for their views about becoming more of a "policy-making group," which was how the chairman sometimes phrased his hopes for the group. Before presenting the details of the responses to this particular question, it would be helpful to analyze the group membership in terms of the type of their involvement (active versus passive) and the type of their expectation (more decision-making versus status quo).

Three (or perhaps four) persons expressed higher expectations of the group as a vehicle for action and policy making. They were also active members.

The great majority were satisfied, in fact, quite enthusiastic, with the format and value of BIG at the present time. Some of them had been playing a relatively active role in presenting ideas and challenging others. Others had been relatively passive, being able to gain from the reports or the interchanges of others, but not feeling they had anything to contribute. One (or two) liked the group meeting in particular because it did not make any demands upon him to state his agency's position.

Finally, one (or two) believed BIG was somewhat of a luxury without real functional value, but enjoyed some aspects of it.

#### Analyses and Implications

At the time of this study it was reasonable to assume that BIG members would continue to develop increasing interpersonal trust and respect, more confidence in the mutuality of their respective goals in foreign affairs, and a higher level of information and competence in handling the many viewpoints and criteria required to deal with multi-agency issues. Certainly as the group developed in these respects, it could become a more potent instrument in foreign affairs.

On the one hand, this potency could mean that BIG improved in performing its current functions, information exchange and mutual education, strengthening relationships which facilitate bilateral interagency transactions, enhancing the importance and reality of Brazilian affairs, etc. Thus, it could contribute indirectly to integrated foreign affairs policy making via information, education and informal influence processes. Also, it could contribute indirectly to the problem solving and action taking on specific issues via strengthening the relationships which were the mechanisms for bilateral interagency transactions.

On the other hand, this potency could be accomplished by an assumption of additional functions, engaging more directly in policy making, problem solving and action taking. Several factors can be identified which influence the effectiveness of this development.

If BIG were to become more of an action group, some members who were currently enthusiastic about BIG would become ambivalent. Consider, for example, one member for whom the permissive style of the leader and the non-action nature of the meeting made this group a uniquely satisfying experience. This person was an enthusiastic, albeit passive, member: he valued greatly the insight he gained into the political condition in Brazil, but also greatly resisted the idea of presenting to the group even a report on his agency's policy positions and rationale. This in part derived from the nature of the agency's current policy position and in part from the individual's personal style. Two other persons expressed reluctance to present problems in their respective areas because they did not want other agencies to use this as a basis for becoming involved in the problems.

Increasing the formal power of BIG would tend to inhibit freedom of expression in discussions which bridge communities and agencies. At least one person felt freer to express opinions, share and advocate interpretations, precisely because he did not see himself as expressing the viewpoint of the agency. He didn't clear his contribution with his superiors. A related

point is that many other members felt freer to contribute candidly now because the group itself was a forum, not a decision-making group. Thus, members felt less need to evaluate their remarks in terms of how they related to specific issues.

More emphasis on decision making would make it more difficult to maintain general interest of the total group. The advantage of the forum was that both individuals and the group could accumulate information, ideas, and doubts, for which they might not have any direct or immediate need, but which could have indirect or subsequent value. In contrast, a decision-making or deliberative group would tend to give priority to information which could be directly related to immediate issues. Discussions leading to decision, policies or actions would require more time devoted to a particular topic. Sustained attention to a given issue was likely to lose the interest of some members. The interests of members of the group were so diverse that when they were asked to give a few illustrations of the type of valuable knowledge or insights which they gained from the sessions, there was almost no duplication of illustrations among the dozen members interviewed.

Even if we assume that the problems suggested by the above factors can be dealt with satisfactorily, more fundamental issues are raised by assuming decision-making functions:

Many members of BIG did not have sufficient authority within their own respective agencies to contribute effectively to interagency decision-making. To the extent that the present members don't have sufficient authority, one would create either frustration in BIG or an attempt to change the membership or both. Also an attempt to change the membership to include higher level officials would run into the dilemma that these officials have responsibility much larger than Brazil and therefore would not have the intimate knowledge of Brazil possessed by the present members. Nor would these higher level officials be as able to meet the time demands of BIG which would increase were the group to enlarge its functions.

An early draft of this report was presented in a meeting of BIG in order to facilitate the group's self-assessment of BIG's purposes, methods and value. The prevailing view was that the advantages of informality and community building outweigh those which would result from more structure and enlargement of formal power. For example, the use of formal, published agendas would increase the necessity for several members to check with higher level officials and other groups within their own agency prior to a meeting, and then to attend the meeting more as a formal representative. This type of institutionalization was not only seen as cumbersome but also as inhibiting the free exchange of views now possible. The report and the discussion which ensued enabled the chairmen and the group to converge on common expectations. They concluded that it was realistic and desirable to emphasize the present mutual education and information exchange function of the group.

Later in the year, an experiment in interagency program planning provided a test of the effectiveness of the desk level network of interagency relations. (The experiment is analyzed in Chapter 6.) On that occasion BIG did function as a formal mechanism and did so effectively.

#### Extension of the Concept

Could the BIG concept be applied to other countries? Certain factors contributed to the member commitment to BIG and to group effectiveness that were partly related to Brazil's unique characteristics. Within the bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Brazil was the largest country and important along many different dimensions: (a) as a problem in economic and social development (it represented the United States' largest AID recipient other than South Viet Nam); (b) as a potential trade partner; (c) as a political force; (d) as a security factor in the Western Hemisphere.

Some of the practical implications of these facts are reflected in the following information from the interviews of BIG members:

My agency could not respond to other Latin American interagency groups of the BIG nature. We just don't have the specialists for each country or small group of countries. The same person would have to attend meetings of more than one group and that would be too burdensome.

The director of the Latin American section of the agency cannot attend BIG regularly, although he might be the appropriate one if there were to be more influential roles for BIG.

Actually, the question of transferability should be framed in general terms: Can mechanisms be designed that bridge the different foreign affairs communities, provoke new thinking, build relationships which facilitate interagency transactions, etc.? To this question the author's answers would be affirmative. Many of the elements of the BIG experiment could be applied elsewhere to the problem of achieving coordination at the desk level in Washington.

#### Summary and Conclusions

##### Flow Model

The investigation of BIG made an additional contribution to our picture of the forces toward and against coordination which may exist in the foreign affairs communities. The desk officers were one step removed from the action arena of the overseas mission; therefore the instrumental and expressive stakes were correspondingly weaker stimuli than those observed in the overseas mission. It was noted that the greater physical separation of agency officials in Washington was a somewhat greater barrier to coordination in the United

States capital than in Rio. Two other aspects of the interagency context not referred to in Chapter 3 were significant in our analysis of the BIG situation: On the one hand, the strength of the motivation of agency officials to engage in mutual learning, and on the other hand, bureaucratic red tape as a deterrent to certain types of interagency transactions.

The structure of BIG was simple: The interagency group met about monthly, assuming there were suitably provocative speakers or agenda. The chairman called the meeting, set the agenda, and led the discussion. There was no formal authority and no actions were taken by the group. Members of the group credited the chairman with considerable skill in conducting these meetings.

The process dynamics set in motion by the informal structure and the skillful group leader were self-reinforcing--benefits occurred to members and to the interagency community they represented. BIG had activated some latent motivations for participation in interagency efforts; participants valued learning from others, and, in turn, influencing them. These and related benefits were enough to offset the otherwise discouraging interagency environment.

The importance of bureaucratic red tape became evident when members of BIG contemplated the possibility that the group might become a more formal mechanism. With greater formality they would be speaking "for the record" and would need to secure advanced clearance of their statements from agency superiors. Thus, the environmental factor of red tape and the degree of formality of the interagency mechanism would appear to interact to create a chain of consequences that could influence the nature of the interagency process and results from the effort: (see Figures 4.2). Within the informal structure, the chairman's facilitation of group interaction helped create the benefits. A more ambitious purpose and a more formal structure would make salient a bureaucratic force against interagency contact and might well reverse the positive dynamics, i.e. with more authority wielded by the group and more formality characterizing its functioning, the costs of participation would increase and the current benefits would decrease.

#### Interunit Dynamics and Third Party Roles

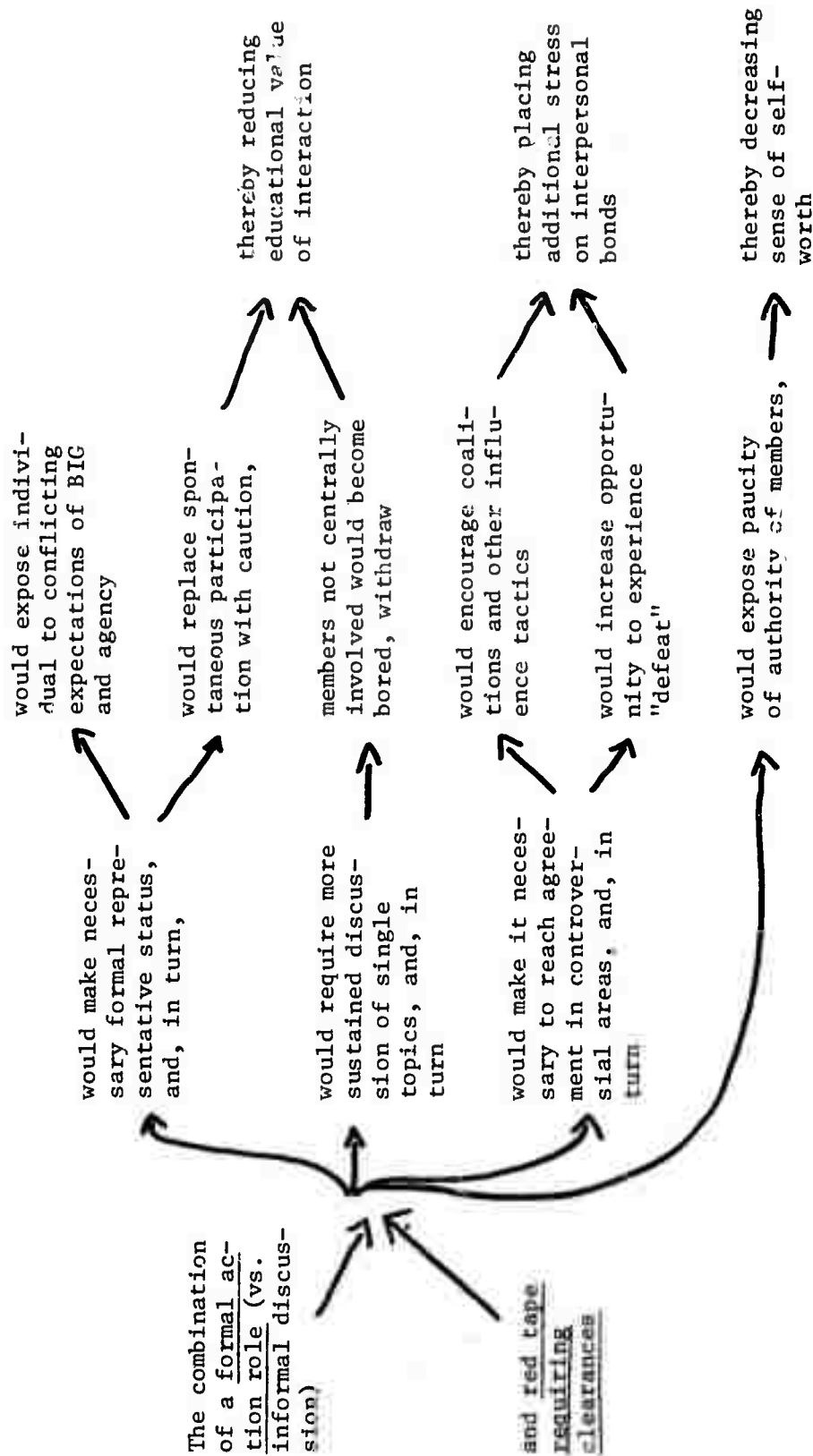
BIG was not a decision-making group, but it was a collaborative task group. Because there was no necessity to make decisions nor to take action, disagreements were readily tolerated. The collaborative task activities had the predicted positive effect on identity reinforcement. Also because of the informality, members felt less need to present a strong agency identity. This factor increased the ease with which collaborative approaches developed toward the discussion tasks of the group. The situation seemed to well illustrate the mutual facilitation of collaborative task activities (albeit not problem solving) and identity reinforcement.

As third parties, the Ambassador in Chapter 3 and the Country Director provide some contrasts. The Ambassador used a relatively heavy hand in promoting coordination typically between two agencies at a time and with respect to particular programs. In contrast, the Country Director was strictly a facilitating agent, relying upon his process skills to create an interagency group which concerned itself with topics of interest but which would not necessarily require action at any foreseeable point. More thorough analysis of the third party functions and role attributes of the Country Director will be deferred to Part III of the volume.



Figure 4.2

Hypothesis: Causal Chain Based on the Interaction of a Structural Characteristic and an Environmental or



## CHAPTER 5

## MANAGING DIFFERENCES IN A POLICY PLANNING WORKING GROUP

The subject of this chapter is an ad hoc working group comprised of a chairman and representatives of 13 separate offices. The group functioned under the auspices of the Policy Planning Council of the State Department and was chaired by a senior Foreign Service Officer. It was formed specifically for the purpose of developing and proposing a statement of the long-term policy of the United States toward a particular country, Country X. It had roughly the same type of inter-agency composition as the Brazil Interdepartmental Group studied in the preceding chapter. However, unlike BIG, the working group analyzed here had a limited life and a specific task, involving policy formulation activities and the writing of documents.

This study analyzes both the potential and actual conflict within the group and the methods employed to handle these differences over the first six months of its life (when meetings were held on a regular basis). The study contains an abundance of illustrative material on third party behavior. The chairman and two organizational consultants generally tried to assist in the management of differences in a way which would contribute to a high level of group effectiveness.<sup>1</sup> The chairman had a direct interest in identifying, sharpening and ultimately achieving resolution of the substantive policy issues. The consultants had a similar interest regarding the interpersonal differences and procedural issues arising from the planning process itself. Of course, there are many other ways one could analyze and conceptualize the structure and process of this particular working group. One could choose any of several specific foci: leadership patterns, group norms and dynamics, creative processes, utilization of informational and intellectual resources, the management of conflict, etc. The author believes, however, that the focus on the third party management of conflict captures much of the important dynamic in this working group and was a key factor influencing the overall effectiveness of this policy planning project.

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<sup>1</sup>The author was one of these consultants. The study was based on observations of this group in operation and interviews with its members. I am indebted to Mr. James A. Carney, Jr., a Foreign Service Officer and the internal consultant who shared responsibility for this venture. Discussions with him were productive of many of the ideas related to this working group contained in this chapter and elsewhere in this volume.

### Introduction - The Planning Task

Excerpts from the procedures governing the working group briefly describe its task and authority:

National Policy Papers are comprehensive, authoritative and unifying statements of U.S. policy toward each country included in the program....

The Secretary of State has assigned general responsibility for the program of National Policy Papers to the Chairman of the Policy Planning Council (S/P).

The Chairman of the Policy Planning Council ... will designate a senior officer to assume responsibility for the paper.... The responsible officer chairs the interagency working group, coordinates the contributions of the various agencies concerned, and assumes major responsibility for drafting the National Policy Paper itself. He is expected to avoid the perils of "drafting by committee" and to provide effective leadership to the interagency working group in arriving at considered judgments concerning the key issues involved. He bears a special responsibility to surface and assure precise definition of differences of view, later to be resolved by higher authority....

The long-term policy document is intended to establish the framework for all shorter-term U.S. policies and all agencies' programs with respect to that country--political, economic aid, commercial, cultural, informational, military assistance, etc. Although all papers are produced under the direction of an S/P officer of the Policy Planning Council of the Department of State, they are developed with varying degrees and types of assistance from representatives of all interested foreign affairs agencies and offices. After the chairman has concluded that he has a reasonably satisfactory first draft, using the information, views and ideas available to him from working level people in Washington, the paper is reviewed in the field, returned to Washington with suggestions from the field and then subjected to whatever debate is required to reach a satisfactory degree of concurrence from high level officials in the many offices and agencies involved. If approved, papers go to the Secretary of State for his signature. If they fail to gain approval, they are held up until they can be approved, although presumably they could be appealed to the President if the disagreeing agencies were sufficiently concerned. Frequently, the final document is revised to a level of generality or ambiguity that accommodates the opposing viewpoints.

The Policy Planning Council's process and the national policy papers it produces have been criticized by many, both inside and outside State

along the following lines:<sup>1</sup> The process is exhausting and time-consuming; and it is marked by pressures for easy consensus, the papering-over of conflicts, and minimal examination of alternatives and contingencies. The papers lack nuance and are not timely, and they are seldom referred to in practice.

The views of those who have been responsible for the Policy Planning Council's activities are similarly critical of the context within which they must work and the officials upon whom they must rely for substantive input and eventual approval--this includes officials from other State Department offices and from other foreign affairs agencies in Washington. First, one Council official asserts that generally the agency representatives are "either unimaginative or constrained by their own hierarchy in presenting their views." Second, the bureaucratic tendencies of the agencies, separately and in combination, assure that by the time a document has been cleared it has "reduced every policy to the least common denominator"--potential differences either were never clarified or have been smoothed over. Third, to the extent that the documents contain controversial elements the approval is accomplished in ways that still avoid confrontation of differences: "people often try to get clearance by phoning rather than writing, by talking to an official's deputy when the former is out of town, by describing the report in bland terms. Of course, the guy later feels like he was taken in, but he can't say much." Fourth, Council officials, too, are aware that policy papers are not reflected in program development or development planning. As a result these officials' statements reflect feelings of impotency and unrelatedness.

#### Overview of the Development of the Country X Paper

This study reports on the development of a National Policy Paper (NPP) for Country X. The Council officer responsible for the development of this paper was keenly aware of the general attitudes toward the policy-planning process and its product. He was determined to overcome some of these tendencies. This was his first country paper and it was expected that he would attempt to develop improvements in the process which might benefit subsequent papers as well.

The chairman conceived his goals for his effort on Country X as follows:

1. Make this the best national policy paper to date; in particular, he wanted to increase the utility of the papers, by making them more pertinent, sharper in focus, shorter, more timely, and more responsive to the needs of those who make short-run policy decisions and develop programs.

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., Bray (3), p. 13.

2. Create a model for the development of papers, improving procedures for information pooling, debate, drafting and rewriting.

The chairman's goals were known to members of the working group but not shared by them to any great extent. His aspirations were clearly more ambitious than anticipated by those who initiated the effort. The decision to develop a paper on Country X was apparently made in response to the request of the U.S. Ambassador to X and the urging of a field inspection team recently returned from X. Those supporting the development of a new paper did not advocate a change in policy. Rather, they noted that the previous paper contained outdated material and they believed an updated paper would give the Ambassador more leverage in securing approval for various types of implementing actions or programs.

When the decision to develop a paper on X was made, the Policy Planning Council requested agencies with foreign affairs activities in that country to designate persons to assist the chairman as needed. The chairman made an attempt to upgrade the representative designated by one agency, but he was unsuccessful.

Although there was some confusion about individual responsibilities, the general pattern was: (a) Each representative had responsibility for writing a background paper on the area with which his agency was concerned. These were designated Part II papers. (b) The State desk officer for Country X and the chairman shared the tasks of writing the closely related sections of Part I. These sections treated the political analysis of X, U.S. interests and objectives in X, and future U.S. strategy and programs in X.

The interagency working group met approximately weekly or biweekly for five months--January through June--discussing topics designated by the chairman or raised by members during the meeting; and reviewing drafts of sections of the paper written by either a member or the chairman. Because the INR officer and desk officer were the most broadly informed on X's affairs, the chairman met frequently with one or both of them in addition to the regular meetings of the large group.

Five weeks (four meetings) after the group began working, the chairman involved two consultants from State's organizational development group to help him and the working group increase their effectiveness. During this initial period, the meetings had fallen short of the chairman's expectations and he was eager to improve them. At about the same time that he involved the consultants he distributed the following memo to group members in an attempt to make explicit his goals and to open up process issues:

NPP procedures are admittedly--and understandably--somewhat ambiguous. The actual responsibility of the leader and the members of the group, and the role of each is somewhat unclear. What part does the group play in its preparation: as a communication belt to pass views from and among agencies, or as an entity to seek solutions regardless of agency "positions," or to "represent" the interests of the agency in negotiating a paper? What "commitment" do the agency members of the group have to the fulfillment of its task and to its product?

Bureaucratic realism suggests that the ultimate responsibility is in the State Department leader, but that the greatest cooperation and assistance from the agency members is sought, both to improve the product and to enhance its ultimate acceptance by the agencies. But there is a realistic limit to the "commitment" of the members to the group in light of the group leader's stated responsibility and thus a consequent limitation in "willingness" to give in time, effort and resolution of issues.

Given the foregoing, what can be done to enhance the working group participation and to maximize group participation? At a minimum, incentives to cooperation can be developed--within the basic limitations--and deterrents to cooperation can be mitigated. Presumed helpful in this regard would be a discussion within the working group of its role and the procedures which members would find congenial: the most productive manner of reviewing drafts; the best procedure for redrafting; the representation of agency or personal views introduced in discussion; the best anticipation of subsequent draft clearances within agencies.

A possible introduction to such discussion follows:

NPP procedures are a mixture of group effort and leader responsibility. None of us is in a position to make significant change in the fundamental ground rules though our experience may well lead us to suggest such changes for other NPP production.

Personally I am very keen to make this the best NPP to date. I am also very interested in finding ways of getting better NPPs produced.

However, I am in a very real quandary over procedures to follow. In particular I am not at all sure how I can correctly and properly fulfill the role of chairman or leader, to enhance the effort.

My specific goal is to see what can be done to maximize the participation and commitment of the working group to the effort--not to any particular policy in the paper, of course. I warmly invite comment and suggestion on my role and on the procedures generally.

How do you see yourselves best fulfilling your role? How can I help to bring this about?

Over the next 3-1/2 months the character of the meetings varied greatly. This variation is reflected in the consultants' notes about the chairman's reactions immediately following several meetings: "He expressed pleasure with this meeting " (March 14); "He was quite content with the process resulting from this meeting...." (April 5). "He was disgusted with the meeting today and wanted to know what was going wrong " (April 12). On May 8, he commented to the consultants "I've been trying to get as much as possible out of the working group--both written and oral--and my judgment is that I've gotten a reasonable amount.... My assessment is that we've done par for the course." The next few meetings were somewhat more discouraging.

In the middle of June, the chairman decided to discontinue the weekly meetings and to write a complete draft of the paper. A month later he reconvened the group to learn their reactions to his draft.

Thus, the paper for Country X had not been completed by July when the observations on which this study was based were discontinued. The group was no longer active, although it was to be reconvened a few times several months later when the consultants were no longer involved in the State Department's organizational development program.

By summer the chairman had concluded that the working group "had run its useful course toward both the objective of producing a paper and the development of the group's methods." He felt he had learned what he could from this group and that both objectives could be furthered better in settings other than the working group.

In reading the following account of the varied efforts and techniques that the chairman employed, it is important for the reader to keep in mind that the chairman was relatively experimental because of his goal to make methodological improvements in the process.

#### Substantive Conflicts and Third Party Roles

#### Substantive Differences--Latent and Manifest

When thirteen men from specialized agencies and offices meet to develop one comprehensive, authoritative and unifying statement of U.S. policy toward a particular country with whom each has a primary concern, it is reasonable to assume that important differences will exist among

their views. They each have specialized responsibilities, interests and information regarding Country X; their contact with X is variable in time; and their personal value systems are almost certain to differ in ways relevant to policy issues. Such differences are the ingredients which enable a group to develop an enlightened and viable policy. Thus, the chairman wanted first to identify and sharpen differences in views so that it would be possible subsequently to (a) make "either-or" choices where necessary, (b) compromise where appropriate, and (c) achieve a higher level of integration or synthesis wherever possible.

The chairman himself was in many respects less familiar with Country X affairs than were many of the other members of the group. In addition, he was relatively uncommitted to any particular view regarding X. The written procedures for the working group required that he "bear a special responsibility to surface and assure precise definition of differences of view...." He could appropriately be characterized as a third party interested in promoting a confrontation of views.

The chairman believed that an exploration of conflicting assumptions about, and interpretations of, events and conditions in Country X would be likely to promote the group task (and maybe increase the genuine consensus in the long run). He believed that generating and debating alternative strategies for U.S. affairs with X would improve the quality of the final document and/or probably increase the general confidence in the policy recommended. Therefore, the chairman employed a series of strategies for identifying and exploring substantive differences.

As a result, certain important differences in views within the group did become apparent: (a) There were different interpretations and assessments of trends within Country X. (b) There were different assumptions about the nature and degree of interest in X by another major power. (c) There were different evaluations of the desirability or undesirability for the U.S. of the current state of affairs regarding X. (d) There were different estimates of the likely responses of X and the Soviet Union to possible U.S. actions toward X. (e) There were opposing preferences regarding the present policy versus a hard line toward X.

It took great effort to flush out these differences; it was more difficult to further delineate the views which appeared to differ; it was virtually impossible to effect sustained consideration of the factors which underlay them (i.e., different factual knowledge; different historical orientation, etc.) and their implications for U.S. policy. In fact, if one tried to explore differences, they tended to disappear--members would find ways to smooth them over and/or emphasize something on which they could agree.



### Tendencies to Avoid Substantive Differences

Before we discuss each of the chairman's major strategies for confronting substantive differences, we should identify those factors or forces that were operating to discourage members from engaging in this type of exchange: bureaucratic norms, low level of agency representation, low self-confidence, tactical considerations, attitude toward the whole policy-planning process, preoccupation with programs, and interpersonal styles of members. In addition, new sources of inhibition were generated during the group experience itself.

1. Constraining factors included the pervasive bureaucratic tendencies toward the defensive, cautious attitude of "nothing ventured, nothing lost." Therefore, representatives were predisposed to avoid or suppress conflict whether it be within or between agencies.
2. The pattern of agency representation had further effects of two kinds: First, agencies were represented by officials whose interests focused on this one country or a group of countries, and who therefore had the most detailed knowledge about the country. However, their primary concern with on-going operations and programs limited their ability to think in terms of policy. Second, these officials were relatively low in the agency hierarchy and had limited confidence that they could persuade their respective assistant secretaries on policy matters.
3. Certain tactical considerations may also have influenced members' reluctance to confront differences in the working group. If an interagency debate or struggle were expected to develop, disagreeing agencies may have believed it to be wise to wait and see where the State Department itself netted out--after the latter's own internal debate ran its course. In this working group the INR office, the desk officer for Country X and the chairman were all from State. Also, the representative of an agency involved in a policy disagreement may prefer to determine outside the group how other agencies line up on the issue before deciding whether to take a stand.
4. Within the working group, it was generally assumed by the other members that the desk officer and the INR officer were the experts; therefore, these other members were inhibited by their own lack of self-confidence in their ability to contribute.

5. Attitudes of key members were a factor in this working group. The desk officer did not agree that a new policy paper was needed. His general opposition to the process included declining to enter into any serious exploration of significant issues or into substantive debate. The INR officer was busy with another urgent assignment during the first three months of the group's work.
6. Other members who were somewhat pessimistic about the probable impact or utilization of the final document may have tended to restrain their own enthusiasm or investment in the process. This attitude, in turn, limited their responsiveness to initiatives for thorough exploration of fundamental differences issues.
7. In addition to the fact that their formal roles entailed limited authority and that they could justify to themselves deferring to the INR man and the desk officer, the members of this particular working group appeared to both the chairman and the consultants to have relatively passive (non-assertive) interpersonal styles.

#### Chairman's Strategies for Promoting Substantive Confrontation

Discussion in Search of Differences. A general strategy used by the chairman to identify differences was to lead discussions during which he could initiate probing actions. The following notes on the March 14 meeting report an early success in this regard.

A mild debate developed between two members regarding how to treat the special relationship between Country X and another country. The chairman posed the question, "Do we really have any alternative to offer X?" Responding to the statement as if it was a constructive challenge, one member said with confidence, "Yes, we do." Then as if to say, "O.K., granted that," the chairman thrust, "How much of this relationship would we want to change?" There followed a general debate of question, with all members participating. (Thus within the first twenty minutes all members present had participated without being called upon by the chairman.) Two members articulated the following, "They've reached a modus vivendi and we would be doing them a disfavor to try to change that.... I don't think we want to induce a sequence of actions and reactions...." All nodded in agreement, except one member who asserted and elaborated a dissenting point of view.

The chairman then raised a question about the definition of the group's task (presumably his way of terminating a substantive debate which had not reached consensus, but had run its course). He said, "Taking third countries into account in our objectives is too much to do." A member responded to the suggestion that the issue might be included in a particular introductory section. The chairman then redefined the substantive issue in a way which made it more of a descriptive task rather than an evaluative debate. He posed, "What are the special limiting aspects of the relations between X and third countries? We need to spell these out." Ignoring this tack, one member returned to the debate, attempting to sharpen the issue, "This is no time to create changes...." Another disagreed, "This is precisely the time to take advantage of the opportunity to bring them into a more favorable orientation to the U.S."

The meeting continued in the above manner. The chairman's style in this session included (a) allowing a position he does not necessarily accept and going on to the next logical implication of it; (b) summarizing, synthesizing, sharpening and articulating the discussion of others; (c) sharing his own internal doubt and generally making it easy for others to express doubts and tentativeness. The group, for its part, showed interest and involvement in the ideas. The chairman could have been characterized as seminar leader and the session as a seminar.

The essential ingredients of the chairman's approach in the March 14 meeting were (a) an attempt to pose discriminating questions, (b) an appeal to the members' intellectual honesty, and (c) skill at managing the discussion produced. It should also be noted that the INR man and the desk officer were not present for this meeting, lending support to the hypothesis that members had tended to be inhibited by their assumption that these two State officials were the experts.

A more coercive form of this general strategy occurred during the April 5 meeting:

The agency representative whose paper was being discussed tried to avoid an important issue by saying that since his agency and State didn't agree on this problem he didn't want to bring it up. The chairman then broke in to say that issues and conflict were the very things that they wanted to get out on the table. The man then somewhat reluctantly presented his agency's position on this issue. The INR officer coldly pointed out that the position advanced was weak

and proceeded to show its inconsistencies. The person whose position was under scrutiny became highly nervous and defensive. When another representative from the same agency agreed in substance with the INR man, the first representative turned to him and said, "You're supposed to be on my side."

In this review of policy, the chairman was handicapped in the early phases of the process in that he had no prior ideas about which key issues should be sharpened in the report. Also, he was handicapped in some particular meetings where a principal advocate of a point of view was absent. For example, when one member presented his analysis of internal security, the meeting was not attended by another member who had indicated earlier that his agency was in disagreement. In such an instance, the chairman's ability to sharpen issues through discussion was severely affected.

Rewarding Members Who Surfaced Differences. In combination with his more direct attempts to elicit differences through discussion, the chairman tried to create a climate in which members would gain gratification from this intellectual activity. He tried to create a colleague atmosphere, reassuring all members that they could offer relevant content. He also directly rewarded the group and specific members for good work, including identification and exploration of conflicting views. For example, after a productive debate on March 15, he showed obvious pleasure and congratulated the group for a "tremendous contribution." However, in this, and the previous approach by the chairman, his inducements were not strong enough to overcome the constraints described above. It is significant that both this and the previous strategy would have been more effective if some group commitment had developed--a proposition which he understood. This realization was part of the inducement for him to bring in the consultants in organization development.

Occasionally the nature of the chairman's reinforcement appeared to be self-defeating--rewarding the fact that a member had taken issue with him rather than pursuing the details and implications of the disagreement itself. For example, in the May 9 meetings the INR man objected that he couldn't assign weights to all of the objectives as stated--he had to split certain ones. The chairman correctly took this as a signal that the INR officer was seriously pursuing the task and made a genuinely appreciative comment, but did not follow this up for an understanding of the content of his point, a point which sounded as if it had potential for clarifying the differences among the views of members, including the chairman.

Revealing Differences by Measurement Exercises. The chairman devoted an early session to a presentation by the director of a staff group in the Department of State which was developing a foreign affairs programming system (FAPS). He also included a member of the FAPS staff as a permanent member of the working group. FAPS has developed a tentative standard category of objectives applicable to all countries. The chairman shared the view that shaping the objectives to fit the comprehensive and mutually exclusive aspects of the FAPS grid could greatly enhance precision in stating U.S. purposes. Moreover, he believed this exercise in precision would be likely to identify new differences and sharpen existing ones.

The chairman also desired to achieve representation and/or quantification of relative values, where such an approach would be conducive to the improvement of the final paper or would assist in the process. He believed that by giving weights to the many U.S. objectives regarding X it would be possible to increase the precision in the policy statements and provide helpful guidance for defining programs and action. In any event, a comparison among members of the ranks or weights assigned to objectives should assist them in revealing differences.

Therefore, the chairman attempted to make considerable use of both the category scheme and the quantification techniques. In addition to a presentation of the FAPS grid, he and the member from the FAPS staff translated an earlier statement of objectives developed by the desk officer into the FAPS system. Most other members were either indifferent or antagonistic toward the version using the category system--a conflict between the chairman and these group members persisted throughout the life of the group. (This process conflict will be explored later in the chapter.)

His first attempt at a quantification exercise involved ranking the importance of target groups for U.S. cultural activities in X. This was effective in identifying differences, e.g., businessmen were ranked fourth by commerce, but lower by other members of the group. Most members joined in the exercise, but the INR officer disassociated himself from the exercise, questioning its intellectual honesty.

The chairman planned a more significant exercise, rating the U.S. objectives regarding X in terms of (a) their importance, and (b) their susceptibility to influence by the U.S. Combination of these two factors should indicate priority areas for U.S. action. As a result of resistance from the INR officer (another conflict interchange to be reported later) the exercise was delayed from May 2 to May 9, allowing members more time to think seriously about their ratings.

While the chairman's intervention utilizing this exercise had the potential for sharpening differences, it was neither well designed in detail nor executed in a way that made it productive. Because individuals were allowed to use their own rating scales their ratings were not comparable and would not permit the systematic exploration of differences. Because the chairman hadn't planned an efficient means for compiling the data, the first hour of the meeting was taken up just recording each member's ratings. Also, because the spirit in which members had prepared was more compliant than enthusiastic, there was only moderate commitment and tolerance for inefficiency. Essentially it was up to the chairman to demonstrate the usefulness of the exercise. Unfortunately, the chairman, who appeared somewhat harassed by the confusion over scales and the mechanics for gathering the ratings, was not able to follow up on the several possible issues which were mentioned. If a higher degree of member commitment to a collaborative group process had existed, the degree of detailed planning for this exercise would have made less difference--the group could have made it work, a point we shall return to again.

Related techniques were used in a lesser way to contribute to the process. The chairman wished to induce members to think out the implications for U.S. policy under different hypothetical conditions. For example, he would have liked to pursue just what the U.S. might do if there were no constraints on resources. Many members resisted this approach as well.

"Devil's Advocate" Strategy for Exploring Differences. In still another technique, the chairman developed what he regarded as a relatively extreme (hard line) strategy paper. Although he did not indicate this to members, his intent was to be provocative--to elicit a more discriminating and persuasive rationale for the other strategies persons favored. Also the differential responses of members to this clearly hard strategy should further expose the latent differences within the group.

This strategy also had mixed success. It did elicit a letter of opposition from a colleague. However, an early version of the paper presented to another group succeeded in eliciting criticism regarding the category scheme for objectives, but did not accomplish any sharpening of issues. The session (June 7) in which the working group met to consider the paper was also disappointing. Despite the fact that (a) the chairman's paper was hard line, directly contrary to the views of a majority and more extreme than the few who leaned in that direction; and (b) frequently reached conclusions not at all suggested by the analysis, the members were not aroused to debate it. It is still not clear what was operating to counteract this stimulus by the chairman which was so strong that even the consultants felt impelled to respond at the content level.

One hypothesis is that members did not take him seriously and were confident that he himself would retreat without any effort on their part. A related hypothesis is that members regarded this as a game, which they chose not to play. In any event, there appeared to be a desire not to prolong the meeting and the total process.

It appeared to the consultants that the more the chairman escalated his techniques and efforts to sharpen differences the more members went along with (did not express dissent from) ideas blatantly contradictory to every utterance they had made in the group. Therefore, the more the members had the feeling of having invested too much for too little results, the more inefficient the process became.

The analysis of process conflicts--e.g., over methods employed in the groups--will indicate why interventions to create substantive conflict themselves were not more effective.

### Process Issues and Third Party Roles

#### The Nature of the Process Issues

Members of any newly created group will encounter a wide range of issues as they define group goals, choose work methods, and accommodate to each other's interpersonal styles. This group was no exception. In fact, it probably had more "process issues" than most working groups because: there are so many ways of approaching the discussion-writing task, members had had no prior experience in this setting, and the chairman had both demanding standards regarding the quality of the process and the paper output and an experimental attitude toward the task process.

The following process conflicts are arranged generally--but not strictly--in the same order in which they became issues for the group over the life of the group.

Some Fundamental Differences. A variety of basic differences among members and between members and the chairman existed from the outset.

First, there was a lack of shared goals for the group. At least one key member did not agree that a paper on X was needed. Other members wanted to get the present policy into print because they believed it could then be used as a source of leverage for getting action in Washington on Country X affairs. Thus, at best, members wanted an updated policy paper, perhaps including some particular element of interest to them. Clearly they did not have any prior reason for wanting the X paper to set a new high standard for an NPP, nor were they concerned about innovating in the process itself. In sum, they did not share the chairman's goals for the group.

Second, there was disagreement about certain targets for the group. Many members preferred to aim for only a rough first draft which could be sent to the field. This would allow the embassy personnel to be involved at an earlier stage and "would avoid presenting them with a solid front." The chairman visualized a more thoroughly discussed and polished document.

Third, several persons questioned the criteria used by the Policy Planning Council to assign country papers to senior officers. They felt that a chairman should have more substantive expertise on the country than they perceived the chairman as having relative to Country X. Reciprocally, the chairman was not at all impressed with the intellectual competence of many of the members. Thus there was a lack of basic mutual respect along many interpersonal axes within the group.

Fourth, the chairman and members disagreed about the level of effort which should be devoted to the process. The members preferred a relatively low level; and the chairman expected a high level of effort and commitment.

In anticipation of our later discussion of how the process conflicts were handled, it should be noted that while these four "fundamental" differences were probably recognized by the majority of participants, they never were confronted in the group.

Leadership Style, Member Roles and Group Process. Several elements of the chairman's leadership style combined with members' expectations to produce process issues.

1. The chairman preferred a working process which was flexible, responsive, subject to quick changes at either the initiative of the chairman or members. He wanted to maximize creativity; he was counting on group enthusiasm and member responsibility to energize the process. As a result many of the discussions had an apparent aimlessness. During the consultants' round of interviewing on March 15 and 16, many members expressed the belief that the chairman had not taken a firm enough hand in the process. They were appreciative of an element of permissiveness in the group and of the chairman's responsiveness, but definitely believed that more structure--agenda and procedures--was needed.
2. The chairman expected the group to engage in long, searching, exploratory dialogue and expected members to contribute generously to the drafting and redrafting tasks. He had a tendency to keep the same subject matter churning--both within a session and over sessions. In contrast, members expected him to write the paper, and wanted him to take a more active role in pulling things together in discussions and putting them on paper. As early as March 15 and 16 a few expressed a desire for a "hard first draft."



3. A few complained about the chairman in more specific terms (in interviews with the consultants on March 15 and 16). Some members felt that the chairman had unreasonable expectations about the need for members to attend all meetings. A few resented that the chairman had first placed great pressure on members to get their papers written for Part II but then had not yet discussed the papers. The chairman had imposed on one member an assignment for a "computer study" of his agency's activities--an assignment which he did not agree was necessary and which could be accomplished on top of his normal duties only with substantial personal cost. None of these matters had been taken up with the chairman in a direct way.

Two members, the INR man and the desk officer, somewhat resented the time and effort required for them to "educate the chairman on Country X." Early in the process they spent considerable time between meetings essentially familiarizing him with X's affairs. They believed he could have picked up much of this background information from written documents and that he was unreasonable to demand their personal time. The chairman, for his part, saw these members as non-cooperative.

4. The chairman's pattern of leading discussion was sometimes very effective (the March meeting described earlier was a prime example), at other times ineffective. To the consultants, the chairman seemed unable to tolerate much silence, and often tended to overstimulate or to become overcontrolling. When he was unsuccessful in stimulating discussion, he may have contributed to member frustration and irritation.
5. Another pattern observed by the consultants may also have created some problems for members. While the chairman was flexible and responsive at the tactical level of the group's work, he tended to keep purposes and intentions to himself. For example, he did not share with other members his plans ultimately to have the sections of Part II reduced to two or three pages. Nor did he disclose that he himself did not subscribe to the hard line strategy he submitted to them for comments.

Chairman's Desire and Methods for Achieving Precision. As we noted earlier, one of the chairman's strategies for promoting confrontation of substantive issues involved using precision methods: (a) a comprehensive, mutually exclusive category scheme for objectives; (b) ranking and weighting scales for quantifying elements of the total planning analysis; and (c) arraying policy implications of various hypothetical conditions. We also noted that these methods were only moderately successful in surfacing and exploring substantive differences among members, partly because of member resistance to the methods.

The conflict over the use of the category scheme became apparent on many separate occasions throughout the group--almost every member at some point mentioned in the group his (or her) difficulty in using objectives displayed in the FAPS type scheme and asserted a preference for the more traditional format for discussing objectives. In remarks to the consultants several members questioned the chairman's judgment in devoting a session to the FAPS presentation.

The conflict over quantification became dramatically manifest on at least two occasions. The first occurred around the decision to quantify objectives.

After the group had finished with the USIA paper, the chairman brought out the list of objectives and asked members to (a) weight objectives according to their importance and (b) rate the same objectives according to the U.S. ability to influence them.

One member said in high emotion, "I don't think we ought to do it now ... I refuse to do it!! It's too much like a game to do it now. I need at least a week." Others in the group voiced some support for this point of view and it was decided to bring ratings to the next meeting.

After the meeting the dissenting member, the INR man, told a consultant: "the substance of the problems in X are far too serious ... diplomacy is an art, not a science ... objectives are guidelines and aids to focus intuitive thought."

He voiced further annoyance at the chairman's emphasis on methodology. In fact, he believed the deficiencies in the chairman's approach would be revealed by a test: use two groups working on the same country, "one the intuitive way, the other the scientific way."

The second major manifestation of this conflict was less direct; it was reflected in the members' low level of preparation for the next meeting and the generally low quality of the discussion of the ratings. The discussion was marked by nervous laughter and joking, including deprecating remarks about the significance of the numerical results which had been obtained. The following gives the flavor of the first half of the meeting on May 9:

Member 1: "I had 400" (referring to the weight he assigned to a given objective).

Member 2: "I had 800."

Chairman: "Atta boy" (reinforcing an instance of intermember difference).

Member 3: "That's known as escalation."

Laughing and further joking followed which in turn was followed by confusion and debate about whether it made a difference that members used different scales. Eventually the chairman accepted the advice of a member who claimed some expertise in this methodology--he proceeded allowing individual scales. Finally, the weighting scores of all members were compiled for each objective. The chairman scanned the compilations.

Chairman: "I don't know what this tells us, but it's tremendously curious." (Laughter by others.)

Member 4: "Nothing! Since we used different scales."

What accounts for members' resistance to these "precision methodologies?" Some resistance was just another reflection of many members' preference not to confront interagency policy conflicts in the working group. However, many of the members had a more direct antipathy toward these methods.

The chairman and the consultants generated the following several hypotheses to explain what they agreed was real and widespread<sup>3</sup> resistance: (a) resistance to anything new; (b) resistance to the "scientific methods" versus the art of the intuitive; (c) resistance borne out by the assumption that the chairman was too serious about the results of the exercise and was taking the idea too far; (d) resistance to quantification because it reduces the flexibility inherent in ambiguity.

Other Sources of Strain. By the later stages of the group history, there had been an accumulation of irritants and mounting frustration.

1. There was a growing frustration as the increasing time investment did not appear to move the group ahead. As early as the March 15 round of interviews, every member complained of the consumption of personal time and stated that he was eager to have the task proceed more efficiently. After they began the round of reviewing each of the Part II sections, there was evidence of some movement. However, when that cycle was completed the group returned to the Part I sections and the process appeared to bog down and become repetitious. This was particularly dramatized by the many attempts at restating objectives.

2. Already tenuous relations were further strained by differences between the chairman and members about the adequacy of the latter's reports. The reports were variable in quality. For example, when the chairman requested a member to go back and rewrite this report, the member showed surprise that the chairman was disappointed. The chairman, for his part, appeared indignant that the agency had omitted an issue regarded as important by the chairman and other members of the group.

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<sup>3</sup> Only the FAPS member and the one other member who occasionally attended meetings gave the chairman support in this area.

3. A similar source of strain concerned differences--apparently quibbling--over the definition of a particular agency's report. The following are excerpts from the consultant's notes on the meeting:

At this point, the chairman, sounding somewhat frustrated, raised the question of whether the statement on internal security didn't cover most of the elements of X's political sector which should be covered in another part of the paper...One member disagreed sharply, saying that the two areas were bound up together in X...Two other members agreed... This discussion continued in a circular manner for awhile, before the chairman halted the discussion, somewhat grumpily, and suggested they move on to the next report.

4. The chairman generally showed admirable restraint in the face of much passivity and unimpressive contributions by members. However, an occasional sharp, chastising remark probably engendered some negative feelings. For example, on June 6, when the INR man excused himself in the middle of meeting to attend a meeting with his superior, the chairman showed his considerable resentment and said, "Tell your boss that he is holding up the work of ten people. I mean it." He would usually inject humor into such a remark. Therefore, it is hard to say what was the net effect--but the consequences must have ranged from enjoyment with the jibe, through indifference, to resentment.

#### Importance of Process Issues Depends on Members' Interdependence

Why are the above process conflicts important? What difference does it make how these conflicts are handled? If process conflicts of the types described above persist, they can decrease the efficiency and effectiveness of the group, result in reduced member commitment and increase the psychological strain on members.

The nature and severity of the negative consequences of unresolved process conflicts depend upon the degree of interdependence among the participants in the process. In this case the amount of interdependence depended in turn upon one's goals and aspirations for the group. For the chairman, the effective resolution of most of these process differences was absolutely essential if he were to achieve his goals and obtain the types of group functioning he desired. Further, his goal for this group was closely linked to his desire to make improvements in the NPP process generally, which was a major career commitment at this time. However, for other members the unresolved process conflict was only a source of job inconvenience (because it prolonged the process) and psychological strain (because of the friction and frustration in the face-to-face meetings). The effect of this process or its output was not important to other members' present job performance or future careers.

To clarify this point, which is crucial to the total analysis of the management of process differences, let us distinguish between (a) a minimum type of interdependencies necessary for achieving a minimally acceptable output; and (b) a higher type of interdependence essential for maximum performance. There are different methods for managing the process conflicts appropriate to the two types of interdependence.

Minimum Interdependence. Minimally, the chairman needed the agency representatives' continued participation in the group's work and the representatives themselves probably felt a strong obligation to continue. The chairman and the members all hoped for each others' eventual support for a document which emerged. In some cases, members may have had particular elements of policy on which they wanted the chairman's ultimate concurrence. Also, all participants were minimally dependent upon each other for not creating too much discomfort during meetings; any member could block the chairman and other members, disagree on trivial as well as important matters, and increase others' discomfort; the chairman could scold, punish, and cajole members. The chairman minimally needed the background information possessed by the various members, especially the INR man and desk officer. The members realized that they were dependent upon the chairman to declare an end to the working group's process. The task activity involved in achieving a minimally satisfactory level of performance in the working group was (a) members pooling their readily available background information and policy ideas; (b) the chairman sorting among these for the most relevant information and most persuasive ideas; and (c) combining them into a balanced and internally consistent document.

In order to work within the minimum level of interdependence framework one can manage process conflict in a couple of ways. One can suppress, avoid, or otherwise control the conflict, trying to minimize its manifest, disruptive consequences--which is how the conflict in this working group was handled. Or one can confront the issues and attempt to work through to some resolution of these issues. If the issues are worked through successfully the process will work more efficiently. If one's effort to confront and work through the issues is abortive, one may actually decrease the efficiency of the group's work.

Where conflicts are controlled and not confronted their expression and consequences are less direct. In this case, the underlying differences were handled mostly by joking and various forms of withdrawal, including lack of preparation, passivity in meetings, leaving early or arriving late for meetings, and not attending meetings. The consultants did not have any systematic knowledge about how the members handled their feelings of conflict and frustration outside the meetings. However, the consultants did hear reports of members venting these feelings to colleagues. Later we will examine the role which the consultants played in helping the chairman handle his feelings.

Higher Levels of Interdependence. The chairman's aspirations for the group required a degree of interdependence and a style of interchange which could not be achieved without resolving the process differences. Recall that the chairman wanted high member commitment to the group task, a creative group process, group norms that favored confrontation of substantive issues and that were amenable to experimental approaches, including "precision methodologies."

As long as there existed fundamental differences about the goals of the group, the major methodologies for reaching those goals, and the roles and styles of members and the chairman, the chairman could not realize his higher level expectations. To resolve these issues would have required confronting them.

Constraints on the Confrontation of Process Conflicts

In an earlier section we listed seven factors which tended to constrain the confrontation of substantive differences in the working group. At least two of those factors also influenced the handling of process conflicts: (a) the bureaucratic tendencies to be cautious and the related general norm of avoiding or suppressing conflict; (b) the non-assertive personal styles of the collection of individuals who comprised the membership of the group. There were several other factors that appear to have particular relevance for the handling of process conflicts.

First, there were a set of factors which ameliorated the effect of the process differences discussed above. Members and the chairman probably did not, on balance, feel these elements as poignantly as they are described. The fact is that the differences, frictions, etc. were offset by the positive aspects of members' attitudes toward their responsibilities and by the attractive aspects of the chairman's style.

The members' basic high level of dedication to their jobs offset any tendency they had to be alienated from the working group and permitted them to function in the group despite their personal reactions. Moreover, several members had worked for long periods of time on X's affairs and had a deep interest in U.S. policy in that area. This basic commitment tended to guarantee a certain level of member contribution regardless of process issues. Also the members appeared to have developed a general bureaucratic tolerance for inefficient, non-productive meetings. Therefore, just as there were no peaks of enthusiasm or brilliance on the part of the group, neither was it easily moved to despair. Thus, there was a floor on the level of withdrawal or actuated antagonism which decreased the likelihood that a confrontation would be precipitated.

Certain qualities of the chairman himself offset many of the differences members had with him. Taking the edge off their differences in aspirations for the group's performance was the chairman's boyish enthusiasm. Even though the chairman asked for more effort than they expected to give, his own diligence made it difficult to get irritated with him.

Although he took his task seriously, he did not take himself too seriously. His ability to criticize himself, his own willingness to joke at his own expense, and his apparent openness to many types of influence were all redeeming qualities. It is true that he occasionally criticized and scolded. However, despite the fact that he was generally more discouraged with member performance than favorably impressed, he tended to use rewards more than punishments in attempting to influence the group.

Second, members were not likely to express directly those negative feelings which they had because of the costs and risks in confronting. The accumulating personal frustrations and inconveniences did not justify risking an interagency "incident." Nor were members inclined to want to risk any personal embarrassment in front of others.

Finally, there just was no adequate incentive for members to confront. Recall the earlier analysis of the influence of levels of expected performance and degrees of required interdependence upon methods for handling process conflict. This analysis would indicate that because members had only modest output expectations they might favor controlling (suppressing, avoiding) conflict rather than confronting it in the interest of resolving it. In any event, they clearly had less incentive to confront and resolve it than did the chairman. That is to say, suppressing the conflict was objectively a relatively more satisfactory solution for members than for the chairman. The payoff members could perceive for confronting was the dual possibilities of a more efficient or less efficient process.

#### Attempts to Handle Process Issues

We have reviewed the large number of latent process issues in this group, observed that they were generally not confronted in the group, and analyzed the basic factors which tended to constrain members from surfacing them. Now we turn to an analysis of the efforts by the chairman and the consultants to handle these differences as constructively as possible.

Chairman's Invitations for Discussion of Procedural and Process Differences. The chairman made various and repeated attempts to initiate discussion of procedural issues. He invited comments--critical or otherwise--on how he as chairman and the group as a whole were functioning or might function more effectively. When he became discouraged by the progress of the group, he became especially eager to have members express their differences and contribute ideas on how to proceed.

After four meetings, little had been accomplished; draft submissions by members had been late and incomplete or of low quality in the opinion of the chairman. While he was not especially impressed with the inherent strengths of the group, he assumed that part of the problem was his style of leadership. He invited the participation of the State Department's organizational development program group. As a result an internal consultant

and an external consultant began to observe the working group meetings and discuss with the chairman certain factors that might be affecting the productivity of the group. He also distributed the memo presented earlier in this chapter which made explicit his goals and invited discussion of working methods.

In some instances, the chairman's leadership behavior was consistent with the open, responsive pattern suggested in the memo referred to above. In other instances his behavior was very different--an observation which we shall explore later. The following consultant's notes were taken from the session a week after he distributed the memo. They illustrate (a) the chairman's reinforcement of a member's disagreement with the usefulness of the scheme which the chairman had introduced for arraying objectives; and (b) his readiness to pursue topics which members advanced.

Before the meeting was officially under way a member sitting at the left of the chairman remarked to him that he found the non-<sup>1</sup>APS statement of objectives easier to work with. The chairman defended the FAPS approach, but tried to respond acceptingly to his ideas.

Although the first member had made only a side comment, other members of the group were attending to his interchange with the chairman. A third member pulled out a sheet of paper and said, "I have worked over that statement of objectives." With indications of interest from the chairman and others, he started to read it and indicate types of changes he had made (mostly editorial improvements, sharpening, clarifying, etc.). The chairman asked for the sheet from which he was reading. Others were offering procedural suggestions on how the group might work with his material. A fourth member stood up at the board; others were revising their own copies as the draft was read. (The chairman was responsive and seemed to be willing to go anywhere and any way there was interest and initiative provided from within the group.)

As a supplement to the chairman's efforts, the consultants tried to help him better handle the process conflicts by three broad methods: critique interviews with the chairman; data gathering interviews and other communications with members of the working group; interventions in the group process.

Six weeks later sharp interchange occurred between the chairman and the INR officer when the latter challenged him on the use of quantification exercise. The interchange was excerpted earlier during discussion of the nature of process issues. Subsequent reactions by the chairman reflected his ambivalence about members' openness to influence over the



process: he said he was angry that the member had expressed his feelings so strongly. The consultant asked whether the chairman was also pleased that the INR officer felt free to challenge him. The chairman then said, "But I wanted to go ahead and do it." However, the subsequent reaction by the INR officer illustrated the benefits of this type of interchange. He told one consultant, "I feel better about the relationship with the chairman because our differences are in the open. We each know where the other stands. I'd say our working relationship is pretty good."

Consultants' Critique Sessions with the Chairman. In consulting with the chairman, the consultants were working with only one participant to the process differences, but one who was both strategic to the process and very interested in modifying his approach if appropriate. The consultants met with the chairman both shortly before and immediately after meetings. The internal consultant attended all but a couple of the working group meetings after becoming involved in March. The external consultant who was attached to a university attended about a third of the meetings after joining the project. Based on analysis of the nature of these pre- and post-session interactions, it appears that the consultants performed the following functions for the chairman: (a) provided support and an opportunity for ventilation; (b) supplied additional observations about group meeting processes and offered diagnosis; (c) served as a sounding board and coach for the chairman regarding management of process difficulties.

1. In the brief sessions immediately after a working group meeting, the chairman would often ventilate his feelings--frequently dissatisfaction, disgust, irritation, exasperation, anger. He correctly assumed that the consultants would accept his feelings--neither ask him to deny them nor disapprove of him for having the feelings. Moreover, the chairman knew that the consultants had an interest in helping him; and he must have realized, too, that they had warm personal feelings toward him as well. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the chairman derived some social-emotional support from these contacts with the consultants at a time when it is also reasonable to assume he could use it.

2. The predominant consulting activity in the critique session was supplying the chairman with additional process observations and generating and evaluating diagnostic hypotheses. The new data provided the chairman was of several sorts: consultants' observations in the working group meeting; the consultants' own reactions to the group process and particularly to the chairman's actions, which were suggestive of how the other members might have been reacting privately; reports on the general nature of reactions of members learned by interviews or other contacts outside the group meeting. The last type of data--based on discussions with members--was provided in a sufficiently general or anonymous form that the confidence of his members involved was assured in cases where there was any particular concern on his part.

The content of these process observations included many elements of the analysis in this report--in bits and pieces, of course. However, one particularly significant type of "feedback" to a participant to process conflicts is to confront him with observations about discrepancies between his statements and actions. An initial observation recorded in the consultants' notes is illustrative:

The chairman says he is ready to try methods to get more group involvement. But he does not appear really committed to sharing control over the operation with the group. He partly appreciates this dilemma.

Similarly, it was pointed out to the chairman that he wanted members to contribute personal ideas--to take personal risks in the group; and yet he hadn't established a climate of interpersonal familiarity after six weeks; members did not know each other by name.

The chairman was very receptive to both personal, confronting "feedback" and diagnostic observations on other elements of group process. He was quick to grasp it intellectually. He was as independent as he was receptive--that is, he had his own means for testing the validity of the consultants' hypotheses. These aspects of the critiques were usually mutually gratifying to the chairman and the consultants.

3. The chairman usually tested his plans for future meetings with the consultants--who could react to these in terms of their understanding of the process differences existing in the group. For example, if a plan advanced by the chairman ignored the members' preference for more structure or their impatience with certain repetitive tasks, the consultants might essentially negotiate a middle group course between the chairman's predisposition and the group's preferences.

The consultants took initiative in directing the chairman's attention to certain process areas. For example, as a result of the March 15 and 16 round of interviews, the consultants underscored the critical importance of the chairman's relationship with the INR and desk officers and urged him to make even more effort to meet and build a working relationship with these two. It's difficult to say whether, as a result of the consultants' urgings, he actually increased his effort or was any more successful in these relationships. The consultants offered to participate in any two- or three-person sessions where it would be appropriate. The consultants concluded that they would not work on these relationships by process interventions within the larger group. "There was not the requisite group development nor necessarily the member resources to help."

The coaching aspect of working with the chairman was the most difficult part of the critiques. The chairman was eager for the consultants to translate the diagnoses into action recommendations. Often this was both difficult and futile. Because the chairman's style of operating in the group was an integral part of his total behavior pattern, when in a meeting he often neglected a suggestion for handling the process, suggestions which

had seemed useful to both the consultants and the chairman before the meeting and continued to seem valid to the consultants during the meeting.

Contacts with Other Members. The consultants' third-party relationships to the chairman and the group membership were asymmetrical; there was no pretense to symmetry. The consultants' round of interviewing with all members in March was the only contact with most of these members outside the group. More frequent contact did occur with the two key members either in a subgroup meeting with the chairman or in an interview between such meetings.

The consultants did not perform for members any of the third-party functions listed above as involved in their contacts with the chairman. The contacts probably did have some effects along the following lines. (a) The consultants by their presence and interview questions offered evidence of the chairman's interest in members' views and reactions and in getting their assistance in the process. (b) The consultants underscored the idea of discussing process issues--which is by no means a standard aspect of bureaucratic life. (c) The interviewing gave the consultants essential data with which to enable the chairman to adjust his own behavior to accommodate members' preferences, if he so chose.

Despite the asymmetry in the frequency and nature of contacts with the chairman and members, the consultants attempted to preserve their neutrality on certain central process issues, e.g., the relevance of the precision methodologies, and therefore avoid being identified with the chairman on the issue.

Also, even more basic, the consultants endeavored to maintain a professional objectivity--a type of separateness from the task process and its participants. Presumably this was observed by members and itself should tend to offset the tendency to infer any type of alliance from the fact that there was asymmetry in the nature of the consulting relationship. However, we don't have direct evidence from members on these points.

Process Interventions in the Working Group. In the first three meetings which they attended, the consultants did not participate in the meetings in any way. After the round of interviewing on March 15 and 16, the consultants decided it was important to make a process intervention in the next meeting, based on the following considerations: (a) The interviews had served to build a relationship between the consultants and group members and therefore the latter would be more likely to be able to use the assistance, if it was on target. (b) Because of the consultants' new insights into the group's process issues, such an intervention was more likely to be on target. (c) The consultants wanted to build an active process role for themselves--and it was essential to start sooner rather than later.

The consultants did begin to make process interventions--of at least three types:

One type of intervention related to the regulation of the process. If the chairman was passing over a suggestion made by a member earlier in the session, the consultant might suggest that the chairman return to the member's concern before proceeding. Or the consultant might try to break a log jam, as the internal consultant recalled:

For example, during the discussion of the paper of X agency, one member went into a long monologue and the chairman tried to cut him off. They then engaged in an argument in which the subject wasn't relevant to the group. Members were just sitting and watching. Both had become polarized on the topic and neither appeared willing to let it pass. I intervened, saying, "I hear you two fighting and there is obviously some problem between you; and yet it doesn't relate to the discussion." That was enough to break the log jam!

A second type of intervention was to model confrontation behavior. The consultants believed that it would be better if the participants dealt explicitly with their process differences. They tried to make this more likely--more legitimate in this setting--by behaving in a confronting way themselves, primarily toward the chairman whom they believed would not be threatened by it. For example, the consultant might challenge him if he seemed to be ignoring an input or if he was becoming defensive about the work methods he had introduced.

A third type of intervention was to try to summarize discussion or sharpen a substantive issue which had been surfaced but not explored.

In analyzing the role of the third-party consultants in this case history, it is important to note certain types of process interventions which were considered, but not actually made. The consultants did not attempt to promote a discussion diagnosing the group process during the working group meetings. Nor did they attempt to work in the group on those interpersonal relationships which were poor, creating an adverse effect on group progress.

In one sense, these more confronting interventions might have been just what was required, at least, to increase the efficiency of the process; and, at best, increase its creativity. Therefore, we need to understand why they weren't made. First, the discussion of the members' own lack of incentive to confront issues is relevant here. The level of group achievement to which they aspired could be achieved by controlling the conflict without confronting it. Also, the consultants sensed the members' fear of the possibilities associated with a candid confrontation, such as an interagency incident and personal embarrassment. A direct choice by the consultants to promote or engineer a confrontation would have appeared to be more in the interests of the chairman than of the members.

Still our analysis indicated that the level of group product the chairman sought was only possible if some higher level of understanding was reached within the group. If that analysis is correct, then the absence of any genuine confrontation in the face of continued important latent process conflicts was decidedly to the disadvantage of the chairman who was the consultants' primary client. These considerations--by themselves--would have indicated the need to go ahead and take the risks associated with a confrontation, assuming reasonably favorable conditions.

It happened that other conditions were largely unfavorable. The fact that there were no really assertive personalities in the group--other than the chairman--lowered the probability of success of an effort to confront.

Also, in some meetings the consultants shared with members and the chairman feelings of discouragement and frustration and may have been partly immobilized by the prospect that their intervention would probably both add to the frustration and prolong the meeting.

Based on hindsight, a strategic deficiency in the third-party consultants' attempts to help manage differences in this working group was not having requested that the group regularly set aside some time at the end or in the middle of each meeting to review and critique group functioning. If this had been regularized over time, the critique could have progressed from safer topics, such as the need for agenda and procedure to more emotion-laden relationship problems.

Another type of design of the situation--coffee breaks or subgroups on elements of the task as a part of the long sessions--could have promoted both more process work and more development of interpersonal bonds.

### Results

The study ended before the task of drafting a long-term policy paper was completed. We don't know anything of the quality of the paper eventually produced; but judging from the high intellectual capacity and standards of the chairman, it would be surprising if the document did not exceed the purposes for which the Ambassador to X and the field inspector had initiated the National Policy Paper procedure.

While there is no basis for appraising the paper itself and its utility, we can assess some aspects of the procedure. We did review a large part of the life of the working group. The group was only to be convened a few times after we stopped observing it. The chairman hoped to innovate in the process; he intended that the group share that goal and that they actively contribute to the innovation. Similarly, he hoped that the group would share his high aspirations for the quality of the product and willingly invest the extra effort to ensure a high quality product. But, in fact, the group never became an active instrument for

achieving these special goals. There were several types of reasons why it didn't. First, members never shared the chairman's goals as he had hoped many of them would. Second, the process issues, some of which were related to the chairman's pattern, were not worked through and as a result were barriers to member commitment and group development. Third, there were not only the factors constraining interagency collaboration generally but some additional skepticism about the National Policy Papers in particular. Fourth, agency representation may not have been of the requisite quality in terms of substantive knowledge, organizational authority, interpersonal assertiveness and intellectual curiosity. With respect to this last factor, especially, one doesn't know how much the quality of individual contributions was an effect rather than a cause of other group difficulties. Finally, the consultants played some apparently useful functions, but not others that in retrospect might have helped promote group effectiveness.

### Summary and Conclusions

#### Flow Model

Many of the basic contextual forces affecting dispositions toward and against collaboration in this interagency group corresponded to those in the BIG setting. There was some particular antipathy toward the Policy Planning Council auspices, largely because participants were skeptical about the utility of the planning documents produced by the Council. Also inherent in the policy-planning concept were bureaucratic norms of caution and tactically-based preferences to confront the issues at another time and place.

Serious engagement among participants was also inhibited by aspects of the effort which could have been designed differently, e.g., the low level of agency representation on the part of the working group, the low self-confidence of members, their interpersonal styles, and their pre-occupation with programs rather than policy. The factors that ensured at least minimum involvement included the dedication of members, desire to avoid interagency criticism, and desire to exercise some influence over the group product.

Within the above mixture of forces from the context and policy planning procedure, the chairman sought to produce not just a satisfactory planning document but an exceptional one and to innovate in the process as well. He wanted to enlist a collaborative group effort toward these more ambitious goals.

#### Interunit Dynamics and Third-Party Roles

Compared with Chapters 3 and 4, this chapter afforded a closer look at behavioral strategies and other dynamics involved in the interagency effort.

Production of a satisfactory planning document required joint problem solving--spelling out alternatives, exploring consequences of alternatives, articulating and ranking superordinate goals. It also would involve some bargaining--making trade-offs of minor issues. Ideally, major issues were not to be compromised, rather opposing views were to be developed in a way that would enable superiors to decide.

Creating an exceptional product would require an even more creative problem-solving process and a more thorough search for integrative solutions before the parties resorted to bargaining or compromise decision making. In short, the kind of interaction system which the chairman required would have a high proportion of problem-solving versus bargaining. Reference to the contrasting tactical requirements of problem solving and bargaining set forth in Chapter 2 indicates that several aspects of this particular policy-planning setting pointed to bargaining, rather than to problem solving. For example, the bureaucratic norm of caution led to preplanned contributions and written position papers (associated with bargaining) rather than spontaneous response (associated with problem solving). Similarly, the low level of representation meant that participants had little or no authority to commit themselves to the working document (a bargaining tactic sometimes referred to as "calculated incompetence"); more authoritative participants are required for problem solving.

Another tactical requirement of problem solving is that the parties must accurately state their goals and preferences and confront their differences. Thus, the chairman should have and did attempt to promote candid confrontation of substantive differences. His third-party efforts in this regard took a variety of forms--discussion probes, measurement devices, devil's advocate experiment, and rewards to members who surfaced differences. These third-party interventions were innovative in conception, but nevertheless failed to really promote the candid confrontation of substantive differences--a step essential to the problem solving.

The failure to achieve the candid confrontation resulted in part from the persistence of certain emotional issues generated by the process. According to the interaction theory presented in Chapter 2, the desired pattern of joint decision making would be more possible with a high proportion of identity reinforcement to identity conflict. Therefore a second major task of the third party chairman and consultants in managing the interfaces in this group was to promote identity reinforcement. There was a host of process issues, many of them involving identity conflict.

1. Many members didn't accept that the chairman was appropriately qualified to chair this working group.
2. Many didn't accept the authority which he assumed when he unilaterally determined methods.

3. A few resented being seen as readily available to educate the chairman about Country X.

4. For his part, the chairman didn't confirm members' competencies.

5. The chairman perceived the ideal member as an intellectually curious and facile individual, whereas the member tended to see his appropriate role behavior as a more cautious and routine reporter of his agency's views.

6. In the early period the chairman tended to see his own role as a seminar leader, an intellectual catalyst, whereas members expected him to take their presentations and then promptly author a document which attempted a coherent synthesis of the various presentations.

7. The use of quantification techniques seemed to violate the self-concept of several members whose model of diplomacy stressed intuitive analysis and the subtle use of language rather than quantitative analysis and standard terms.

8. Although the chairman expected members to move flexibly between institutional roles--as agency representatives--and individual roles--as intellectually free agents--he did little to enable this type of role flexibility. In the opinion of the author, members had a greater need for personal and professional identification than the chairman allowed. This is paradoxical because the chairman was even more interested in access to their personal and professional insights than they were in providing them.

Each of the above differences, most of them involving role expectations or assessments of personal qualifications, led to identity denials which had the effect of frustrating members and often resulted in psychological withdrawal from the working group. Most of these identity conflicts and other process issues were not resolved. The case illustrates the effect of identity conflict in limiting the investments of members' energy in the creative problem-solving activity.

The consultants' efforts have already been treated in terms of the third-party framework and need not be reviewed here.



## CHAPTER 6

## THE INTEGRATIVE POTENTIAL OF A PROGRAM PLANNING EXPERIMENT

This is an appraisal of an experimental cycle of an interagency program planning system. The system involved the development and review of the Country Analysis and Strategy Papers (CASP) concerning each country in the region of Latin America. It was one more response to the growing demand for interagency mechanisms which are pursuant to some coherent set of U.S. policies.

Generally, systematic efforts at coordinated interagency planning have been limited in one or more of the following respects: (a) limited to type of problem, e.g., long-term policy plans or contingency plans; (b) limited to two or three agencies; (c) largely confined to the field or a given level of the agencies' hierarchies in Washington; (d) limited to a single country. The CASP effort related to almost the full spectrum of substantive problems, involved as many parts as possible of the foreign affairs community, and required the participation of their complete hierarchies for one region. The CASP differed from the NCPP (described in Chapter 5) in that the CASP was a shorter-term planning document and emphasized program planning rather than policy planning.

What is the integrative potential in such a program planning exercise? Did it work in a specific, immediate sense? Did it strengthen the integrative tendencies of the community in a more general sense? These are the main questions to which this review of the 1967 CASP cycle is addressed.<sup>1</sup>

Introduction - Background and Overview of the CycleAdditional Interagency Powers for the State Department

The presidential order, NSAM 341, which was issued March 2, 1966, directed the Secretary of State, assisted by the Department's regional assistant secretaries, to assume responsibility to the full extent permitted

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on information and attitudes expressed during personal interviews with approximately 35 Washington-based members of the interagency community involved in Latin American affairs. These included selected desk officers, country directors and regional level officials from the bureau of Inter-American Affairs of the Department of State and equivalents from AID, DOD, USIA, Peace Corps and the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture. The interviews were conducted during the Spring and Summer of 1967. I am indebted to several members of the ACORD staff in the Department of State, with whom I collaborated in an evaluation study of the CASP cycle. Susan Farrington, Walter Hobby and Al Patterson and the author shared responsibility for conducting the interviews. Group discussions facilitated the development of the ideas reported here.

by law for the overall direction, coordination, and supervision of interdepartmental foreign affairs activities. To assist the Secretary of State in his role, the order established a Senior Interdepartmental Group (SIG). The SIG consisted of the Under Secretary of State (Executive Chairman), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of AID, the Director of CIA, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of USIA, and the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Representatives of other agencies with responsibility for specific matters to be considered attended on invitation by the Chairman. In addition, a subordinate Interdepartmental Regional Group (IRG) was established for each geographic region corresponding to the jurisdiction of the geographic bureaus in the Department of State. Each IRG was composed of the regional Assistant Secretary of State (Executive Chairman) and a designated representative from each of the agencies represented on the SIG.

The creation of the SIG and IRGs was clearly a strong boost to the formal leadership role of the State Department in foreign affairs. In effect, the concept of the primacy of the ambassador assisted by a country team was extended to two additional hierarchical levels of the foreign affairs community. A key element of NSAM 341 was the mandate to State to assume overall "direction" of interagency foreign affairs activities. This was given meaning by the "executive chairmanship" power delegated by the President to State Departmental officials. In the words of General Maxwell D. Taylor, who as special consultant to the President recommended the creation of the SIG-IRG apparatus:

. . . . the chairman is an Executive Chairman. This is the code we have developed to describe a chairman who not only presides but also decides. He is charged with the responsibility of reaching a decision on all issues which come before his committee. If, indeed, there is disagreement, then the individual representative of the department disagreeing has the right of appeal to the next higher authority if he does not accept the decision of the chairman.

It is significant for the present study that the assistant secretaries, in their capacities as Executive Chairmen of the interdepartmental regional groups, were required to "work closely with U.S. ambassadors and the country teams abroad and . . . assure the adequacy in their regions of U.S. policy, plans, program, and performance."<sup>2</sup>

#### Phases of the Cycle

By the Fall of 1966 it was evident to the IRG for Inter-American Affairs that closer coordination of planning and programming documents was essential if the NSAM 341 requirements were to be met. On November 30, 1966 the

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<sup>2</sup>White House announcement (37).

group agreed to the creation of an experimental system to produce a consolidated interagency policy and program document for each country in the Latin American region. This document was to be the point of departure for the separate agency, fiscal year 1969 program and budget submissions.

The system cycle had five phases:

I. January-February, 1967 - IRG reviewed agency, fiscal year 1969 program guidance to the field, and directed the country teams to prepare CASPs.

II. March-May, 1967 - Country teams prepared and submitted CASPs.

III. April-June, 1967 - Washington interagency working levels analyzed CASPs and prepared key issues.

IV. May-July, 1967 - IRG reviewed each CASP, and approved them (some were conditional upon major revision).

V. May-September, 1967 - agency program and budget documents prepared consistent with CASPs. (This phase occurred after the field research on which this study is based.)

In phase III the working level analyses were coordinated by individual country directors of state's bureau of Inter-American Affairs. Some country directors used interagency group meetings; others used memoranda and bilateral discussions. Some CASPs were revised in Washington; some were revised in the field. Each country director supervised the preparation of a set of key issues for IRG discussion.

In phase IV the IRG met once a week to review two CASPs at a session. Some ambassadors or other country team members participated. Certain agencies, such as the Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Treasury, Peace Corps, and the Bureau of the Budget, participated occasionally.

#### Purposes of the Cycle

In the author's opinion there were three underlying purposes of the CASP cycle, all implicit in NSAM 341 and the subsequent White House announcement of March 4:

1. To promote greater rigor and sophistication in the process and products of program planning.
2. To contribute to the development of deeper insights by Washington and the field into one another's situations.
3. To contribute to the development of closer inter-relationships among the foreign affairs agencies and their activities.

Within the terms of each of the purposes there were at least modest achievements of the experimental CASP cycle in 1967. More importantly, considerable additional potential existed with the CASP system which was not exploited in this initial cycle but which could be realized in subsequent cycles.

Before treating our primary interest here, namely the interagency aspects of the CASP cycle, we need to review something of the nature and quality of the planning documents and the type of field-Washington linkages required.

Rigor in Plans. The CASP cycle was responsive to an urgent need for improvement in the quality of the thinking in the planning process. Several factors contributed to this need in 1967. First, the magnitude, breadth, and complexity of foreign affairs was changing rapidly. Second, improvements were being made in the state of the planning art, for example, in information handling and analytical techniques. Third, the Congress and the U.S. public were demanding a higher level of sophistication in the explanation and justification of foreign affairs activities and policies. These changes required changes in the pattern of thinking by members throughout the foreign affairs system: new concepts needed to be fashioned and adopted; time horizons needed to be lengthened; background assessments needed to include new types of discriminations; more consideration of alternatives were appropriate; and harder questions had to be asked.

In recent years there had been substantial improvements in the quality of the planning processes of many individual agencies, notably Defense and AID. These improvements occurred in some degree in connection with the planning, programming and budgeting systems (PPBS) adopted in individual foreign affairs agencies. The organizational integration of State and AID in the Latin American region had had a positive influence on the quality of political-economic development thinking. The CASP was an effort to build on and extend these earlier efforts.

Without detailing the format of the planning document we can identify several of its features--what was expected from the field and what resulted.

First, the nature of the requested document specifically required attention to the consistency between assessments of the environment within the country, including identification of the threats against U.S. interests and the opportunities for U.S. action and U.S. objectives in that country; and between these U.S. objectives and the magnitude and composition of the U.S. program resources expanded in the country. Many documents met this standard. However, in some cases, the CASP assessments of the country situation were extremely well done, but virtually ignored when the objectives were set forth. Similarly, in some CASPs the relationship between the stated objectives and the allocation of resources to programs was not discussed.

Second, the guidelines sent to the field required quantification of program resources involved. This feature clearly enhanced the value of the document. However in some cases the figures were unreliable.

Third, the guidance attempted to impose a 5 year planning perspective on the field to make possible the use of preventive diplomacy. The requirement for a year-by-year projection of resources over 5 years forced some review of the factors which might impinge upon or shift U.S. policies or programs in the future.

Fourth, in addition to requesting more consistency, realism, precision and longer time perspectives to the plans recommended, the CASP required the country team to develop and set forth viable alternatives to major aspects of the plan. There was a wide range of interpretations about what was wanted in this section, including: a listing of alternatives rejected; a statement of the next best line of action under present conditions; plans that set forth responses to potential opportunities that have some possibility of becoming real; contingent plans if the principal objectives cannot be achieved or if fewer resources are available than had been planned. The options incorporated in the initial CASPs generally fell short of expectations and were regarded by Washington interviewers as "straw men", "not backed by sufficient supporting data", and "an academic exercise." However discouraging were current CASPs when measured against the desirable, the reactions by Washington personnel evidenced an increased awareness of the need for options and heightened appreciation of the difficulty in getting a country team to develop them.

Linkages between Washington and the Field. The CASP system was intended to provide for additional and more productive communications between the overseas mission and Washington. The effectiveness of the total foreign affairs apparatus requires a high level of communication and mutual influence between these two groups--each with access to a different set of facts, each with its own responsibilities and each subject to a different set of pressures. The different orientations of the two groups are complementary, which is one reason why communication is important. The nature of the data and analysis communicated was treated primarily in the earlier sections. Here we are more interested in the amount and general type of field-Washington interchanges.

How do the orientations of the field and Washington contrast? Field personnel tend to take a shorter-run view; and Washington personnel a longer-run perspective. On the one hand, field personnel are relatively more articulate about the importance of the country to which they are assigned; and they have a keener sense of the urgency of problems with respect to that country. On the other hand, Washington officials better appreciate the opportunities for and limitations on additional U.S. resources which can be devoted to that country; and the flexibilities of and constraints on U.S. policies which would be responsive to the situation of that country. Although it is an oversimplification, some interviewees contrast the field's "pro host country" attitudes with Washington's concept of "U.S. self-interest".

Field personnel are more familiar with current conditions in the host country and with the personalities and attitudes of its leaders. Washington personnel are comparably more familiar with and sensitive to the current attitudes of Congress and interest groups in the United States. Both sets of attitudes and conditions are important for decision making.

How factors are weighted in the selection among alternative U.S. programs in the host country provides another point of contrast. Whereas the thinking of Washington officials weights very heavily the basic utilities of the program being considered, the field personnel are more inclined to exploit the best opportunities which become available. An appropriately balanced orientation is more likely with greater field-Washington dialogue.

The field's advantage in appraising the current effectiveness of different policies and programs within the country to which they are assigned is matched by the potential advantage of regional officials in Washington in making supra-country comparisons. Often the inter-country comparisons can be of value to personnel in the mission as well as Washington groups.

There are certain barriers or inhibitions to full, open discussions between these differently oriented groups. One barrier is the necessity to rely so heavily upon written messages, the formality and permanence of which is not conducive to exploratory communications. Another barrier, the time lag between a message and its response, is further discouraging because it prevents a continuous give-and-take interchange.

Also, field personnel are ambivalent about how much they communicate to Washington. They do not want to reveal completely their strategy, their objectives, and their programs to Washington. Usually an Ambassador feels he has greater flexibility if Washington is kept relatively ignorant of his mission's intentions and operations.

Many persons concurred with the idea expressed below that there is  
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general and insurmountable reluctance to commit one's plans to paper--to expose policy intentions prior to implementation. The environment breeds covertness. Neither Foreign Service Officers nor AID personnel want to risk making projections for the hierarchies above them.

This fear of putting plans on paper derives in part from the tendency of reviewers of plans to hold originators to their products. The fear of field personnel also derives from the assumption that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." The CASP was specific enough to permit superficial second guessing; but it was not comprehensive enough to convey all of the relevant subtleties and uncertainties.

Still other sources of irritation affect the quality of field-Washington relations. Field personnel resent the amount of paper work which Washington requires, which itself is a symptom of the feeling of officials in Washington that they don't know enough about conditions, activities and thinking in the field.

The CASP can be evaluated in terms of whether it overcame the field-Washington barriers and created opportunities for two-way communications which could approach a synthesis or balance of their differing orientations. Specifically, to what extent did the implementation of the CASP follow the pattern and intensify the irritations? To what extent did it depart from the pattern and reduce irritants?

The country team was responsible for producing a good document, which was an absolute necessity for making the CASP process productive. A gross measure of the adequacy of Washington's efforts was the percentage of ambassadors who took seriously the cycle this year. Our general impression based on the interview data was that the number was modest.

In only a few cases did productive dialogue occur between the field and the country office while the CASP was still in draft stage. This was possible if the desk officer or country director happened to make a field trip that coincided with the field's preparation of the document or if a key member of the country team happened to visit Washington during that period.

More dialogue occurred when the CASP reached the review stage in the IRG. Several interviewees with regional responsibility stressed the value of the CASP in increasing dialogue between the embassy and the regional offices in Washington; for example:

The CASPs, for the first time, have given both the ambassador and the Latin American bureau front office a one package picture of United States objectives and resources in each country. In return, the ambassadors, especially those attending the IRG meetings, get new insights into Washington perspectives, especially the views of the agencies other than the State Department.

Many things have been surfaced that would have been hidden. In one IRG meeting an ambassador learned just how stiff Washington was becoming on the subject of self-help.

In another IRG meeting, an ambassador provided a picture of developments that had not been clear from the written reports from the country. This was highly valuable to the IRG members. The ambassador also learned more about a Washington policy of central value to his own mission.

In still another IRG meeting an important problem was thoroughly explored. A good CASP document combined with the personal involvement and expert presentation by the ambassador at the IRG meeting convinced the members that the country team's views were sound. In the process the best thinking of several members of the IRG were brought to bear on the problem.

Another person who believed that even though those issues and others would have arisen without a CASP, the process had raised the issues in a more timely fashion.

Seven ambassadors attended the IRG meeting scheduled to review their CASPs. Many IRG members regarded it an important benefit of the CASP that these particular dialogues occurred between themselves and ambassadors. Others indicated that the ambassadors' presence had mixed consequences: their presence strengthened an already existing tendency to spend time on current problems and neglect long range strategy and objectives. However, this tendency probably both reflects and meets a need by IRG members for a more descriptive feel for a situation before they can wrestle with the more abstract issues.

The assigned role of the country office in receiving and reviewing CASPs and developing key issues from them did give content to the vertical, linking role between the field and the IRG. Therefore, the complete cycle will probably have a moderately positive effect on strengthening these linking roles of country directors and desk officers. The effect of those functions would have been greater if desk officers and country directors would have been clearer about what was expected of them and what analytic roles, if any, were being performed by others.

### The Interagency Opportunities and Results

#### Interagency Initiation of the System

The decision to enter into the CASP exercise was made by an interagency group--the IRG. To the extent that the participating members of IRG did, in fact, have an opportunity to fully explore the meaning of CASP and to discuss their reservations, doubts, hopes and expectations, this interagency decision itself would contribute to interagency unity. Apparently both time pressure--to phase in with FY '69--and the normal tendency of agencies to "wait and see" limited the extent to which the decision process created a more basic consensus.



A more apparent "missed opportunity" centered on the development of guidelines for the CASP. Instructions to the field were issued by the office of the Assistant Secretary of State. High level officials from several agencies expressed annoyance or resentment at the lack of opportunity or time available for them to influence the initial CASP guidelines. One official said, "The first our agency really knew of the system was when we received a copy of the instructions to the field." Another said, "Our inputs could have been better if we had been able to influence the system." Still another said, "State rushed into this. It was not developed with our cooperation." According to the official, this last omission had the following consequences: further alienation between the groups directly involved, confused guidelines to the field, and extra messages to the field which apparently strained the agency's Washington-field relations. One working level official in AID commented "CASP is a State document, controlled by the office of the Assistant Secretary of State."

The reasons for the minimal effort to enlist the participation of other agencies include many possibilities. An official from State explained that with respect to at least one agency, the problem was that "you simply can't get them to respond unless you've got an operational problem--and this was still an abstract one." Perhaps there was concern that to allow participation was to invite differences that might either weaken the effort or require an inordinate amount of time to resolve satisfactorily--and there were important time pressures.

#### Country Team Collaboration in Producing the Paper

Officially, the CASP was a task that required considerable interchange among the ambassador and all other members of the country team. Our evidence on how the CASPs were actually developed is based on conversations with Washington officials, some of whom made trips to the field during this period.

In some countries members of the country teams had worked closely together and the CASP helped build a policy consensus. "In Country A, the country team had a reputation for working together and their CASP was in pretty fair shape." Country B was partly collaborative: "The members of the team resolved most of their differences but in a few cases the ambassador made the decisions."

Most comments on the country teams' style of operating were critical. One country director said, "The C paper was a stapling job and didn't comply with the instructions." He also noted that:

There is a country team but it doesn't operate as such . . . if it's divided into agency programs and drafted by each guy on the country team, each includes his own axe unless there's a strong whip . . . a strong ambassador. There's no discrimination in the objectives; they become a catalogue of what people are doing and justifications for doing them.

Of the five countries on which the country directors offered their observations three were similarly regarded as "stapling jobs," by which they meant that the CASPs had been formed from an assemblage of individual agency reports by simply "stapling" them together rather than resolving their differences to generate a unified creative document.

The views of Washington officials of several participating agencies tended to confirm that there had been both limited gains and opportunities missed in the field this year. One member of the defense community noted some gains:

The country teams have been forced to work together and to better define problems. Requirements of quantification have forced them to really analyze and to focus on issues. The country team had a polite but distant relationship with one another. This has improved somewhat.

Another view stressed the deficiencies in this year's efforts:

It appeared that each section had been prepared by a parochial interest; e.g., the basic strategy prepared by a political officer reflected his special interests and ignored other important questions. The Military Group Commander should have been required to participate in developing the basic strategy and the political assessments.

The official of another important agency said, "My counterparts at the country team level were involved in the preparation of the CASP this year. I intend to see that they are even more involved in the future." Although such intention of officials in the Washington hierarchies of these agencies is important, the general view is that it is the ambassador's attitude which is the key to whether the full resources of the country team are used and used in an integrated way.

The Peace Corps represented a special problem: it explicitly opted out of the CASP exercise, offering to have the latest Peace Corps program memorandum annexed to each CASP. This arrangement was worked out by agreement between State and Peace Corps in Washington. Some ambassadors who didn't know of this arrangement initially attempted to bring them fully into the CASP exercise.

#### Promoting Mutual Education

According to many interviews both the development and the review of the document contributed to interagency education. For example, country team members obtained increased recognition that several agencies were contributing to the same goal, e.g., AID, USIA, Peace Corps and the Military Group's inputs toward education. The CASP also "forced the ambassadors into finding out what is going on in their missions." Other officials valued the insights into basic U.S. policies and efforts in a country which they gained from the document. One official said that he obtained

a new level of insight into other agencies' policies and programs which enabled him to better plan his agency's own operations in the field and to review proposals coming to him from the field.

These positive gains in interagency education were only available to those officials who invested the time. Many did not. Many echoed the observations of one country director who said,

In the development and review of the CASP we were conscious of highly parochial contributions from the agencies and desks involved. Many reviewers did not look at the document until just prior to the IRG meeting, and most reviewers looked only at the specific functional area for which they felt some responsibility.

An official who regularly attended the IRG meetings, said, "The other agencies all have played their role on their own interests, but I would like them to sense the impact of other sections on their own programs."

Several factors account for the above observations: First, the time pressure in all phases of the cycle; second, the fact that the State's country offices often defined a minimal deliberation in reviewing the paper; and third, the timidity to get involved in another agency's affairs.

The CASP also was expected to be useful as a document on file for briefing persons at all levels who need to learn about U.S. affairs in a particular country. The range of potential consumers for a record of the whole operation, included new desk officers in State and other agencies; "special emergency task forces of capable people who don't know from second base about the country or countries involved;" working level personnel of agencies without routine contact with the country or country offices. It was also cited as a handy reference if the White House should ask for a total country package. Finally, the CASPs were believed to have some potential value in supporting requests for increased allocations of funds to Latin America vis-à-vis other regions.

#### Surfacing Significant Interagency Issues

The intent of the CASP was to go beyond an exchange of information about agencies' interests, policies, and programs and use this information to identify or surface their differences. This is more easily said than done. As Chapter 4 underscored, officials tend to avoid confrontation of interagency differences. They smooth over differences in order to avoid anything which might precipitate an interagency test of strength. Moreover, language which is ambiguous enough to accommodate interagency differences is often preferred by the agencies involved. Given the degree of autonomy of agencies, two agencies can sometimes implement programs which are respectively pursuant to somewhat inconsistent objectives. These and other factors inhibit the surfacing of issues. To be effective a CASP must offset their effect.

The CASP made a positive contribution by surfacing some interagency issues that otherwise would not have been confronted during the same time period. However, probably those surfaced represented only a modest fraction of the potential issues.

For the most part, interagency meetings at the working level did not focus on interagency differences. Each agency tried to improve language directly related to its activities. With a few exceptions, agencies other than State did not contribute key issues; therefore, there was not even the competition among agencies for the limited attention of the IRG, which would have raised questions about differences in priorities.

In the exceptional case where issues were identified and confronted, and then a compromise or concession produced a resolution at the working level, the resolution may have been more illusory than real. In reference to a disagreement disposed of at the working level, one agency representative said:

Agreement was finally reached when we gave in. I thought we had spent enough time arguing about it. I don't like to spend time fighting between agencies, but it always seems to happen. I wouldn't have given in if it had been something other than a piece of paper. (emphasis added)

Thus, this issue, which the spokesman had referred to as a basic difference between agencies, neither reached the IRG nor was seriously resolved at the working level.

Many issues which did get raised at the IRG level were clarified and confronted but could not be resolved using the CASP as the vehicle for resolution. For example, apparently both Treasury and some AID officials were unhappy with AID funding levels in some CASPs and in particular wanted these levels tied more closely to performance. Eventually the CASP document received their qualified approval on the assumption that the dialogue would continue. The issues would be worked through around the AID program memorandum, the "action document." Hopefully the discussions around the CASP did lay the groundwork for more productive resolution of the issues.

In some cases the surfacing of issues in the IRG made it clear that interagency differences had been imagined or exaggerated. This was true in several instances involving DOD and State. For example, it was reported that one ambassador discovered that his long unstated preferences for handling military aid were quite acceptable to DOD/ISA. Presumably he had not raised the issue earlier because he had expected overwhelming opposition. Another ambassador who tested the position of DOD/ISA on an issue which he deemed of great importance to U.S. political relations with the country in question received a more accommodative, flexible response than he had expected. Nevertheless, one person interviewed said,

The IRG should have done more on the basic DOD-State disagreement, but the summit meeting interfered . . . the IRG-CASP meetings confirmed these differences . . . military policy was pushed actively and came to a split decision. It should be to the SIG.

The Peace Corps representative who attended the IRG meetings indicated that he would not hesitate to become an active participant if he should see that issues more relevant to the Peace Corps were being considered.

Some persons who were interviewed indicated that the real "gut issues" which an agency was prepared to surface were typically not handled in the CASP process. This resulted in part from the unfamiliarity of the process during an experimental cycle and the preference for more familiar channels. It also resulted from a considered desire to avoid the IRG with its broad interagency composition; an agency sometimes preferred bilateral or trilateral discussions. Finally, in at least one case the regional nature of the CASP decision-making mechanism made it less appropriate for an issue which had direct world-wide implications and involved substantial domestic interests. The country directors concerned believed that IRG consideration of the issue interfered with the other high level negotiations by which the issue was being worked. He said "The IRG is something of an irritant to the head of another bureau of State or an agency if he is going to be dictated to by an assistant secretary on a world wide issue . . . Also the assistant secretaries working on the issue know the problem, are serious and responsible, whereas most IRG representatives are not actively involved."

One potential of the CASP cycle is that it would facilitate the explicit review and adjustment of the way U.S. dollar resources are allocated among broadly different types of programs: In effect, this issue would involve questioning the way dollars are allocated among different agencies by Congress. Many interviewees expressed disappointment that the CASP itself and the review process did not deal with potential trade-offs among the programs of different agencies.

On the other hand, occasionally this CASP cycle was viewed as a step in the direction of trade-off decision making.

Its principal value is that it highlights the defects in our system of programming and budgeting. Agencies appear before different committees and in terms of effectiveness some get too much, others not enough. The CASP could be useful to agencies in their presentations on the Hill. It could affect the allocation of resources in terms of effectiveness if Bureau of the Budget or someone else took an overall view. The expenditure process dictates against State control.

Understandably there is considerable reluctance on the part of agencies to engage in this type of analysis: "That is asking one agency to look critically at other agencies' programs."

Strengthening the Interagency Network at the Washington Working Level

The country team headed by the ambassador is an established concept for the overseas mission. The Washington-based IRG chaired by a Regional Assistant Secretary of State, is now functioning for the Latin American region. Generally no comparable formal interagency mechanism or leadership role exists in Washington for the working level of foreign affairs officials concerned with a specific country. (The Brazil Interdepartment Group reported in Chapter 4 is a notable exception!) The CASPs which came in from the field had to be reviewed and key issues developed and reviewed before the documents were considered by the IRG. Here then was a task that required wide interagency participation among officials concerned with each Latin American country. Moreover, since the State officials of the Country office (desk officers and country directors) had a primary responsibility in this phase, the CASP afforded them an opportunity to build or strengthen a coordinative role for State at this level.

The way these pre-IRG reviews of the CASP and of the key issues were handled varied widely. Some desk officers or country directors handled the processes almost completely on a one-to-one basis by phone. Others called meetings inviting participants from all interested agencies.

Although there were exceptions, both the State officials who called the meetings and the participants from other agencies who attended were not especially happy about the meetings. On the one hand, other agencies largely confined their inputs to minor matters and made almost no recommendations for the key issues developed by the country office of State. On the other hand, there were complaints from other agencies that they had not been contacted; that they had not been given adequate advance notice of a meeting in order to properly prepare for it; that the meetings were too unstructured or not well handled in other ways. In one case where the agency official dealt with several countries, he noted that he found himself advising desk officers on how to conduct the interagency reviews.

One consequence of holding the working level meetings--even when they weren't productive in other respects--was the development of interagency working contacts. Several officials from other agencies mentioned this gain and stressed its importance to them. In contrast the country office of State either did not recognize the fact that personnel from other agencies valued the opportunity to get acquainted with each other or didn't feel especially responsible for facilitating the contacts. A typical desk officer comment was that the review process "drew on existing interagency contacts but didn't create new ones."

In the exceptional case where the Country Director for the Office of Brazilian Affairs previously had established and regularly convened an interagency group comprised of working level officials, the CASP review process was implemented in a way apparently satisfactory to all concerned. As one member of the group stated: "The CASP reassured me of the value of the group. This was a pay-out of previous time and energy. It enabled us to get rid of the debris and clarified the stands on the real issues."

In general, however, State did not exploit this potential for demonstrating positive leadership and for contributing to interagency integration at the working level. The explanation includes the general ambiguity around the role of desk officers and country directors within State, the specific confusions which existed regarding procedures and their roles in the CASP process, and the lack of time.

#### Strengthening the Interdepartmental Regional Group

The IRG had been in existence less than a year when the CASP cycle began. The review and approval of the 24 CASPs became a dominant activity during the spring and early summer of 1967. Within a community of relatively autonomous agencies such as that which exists in the U.S. foreign affairs community, the effective influence of even a formal interagency mechanism depends in large part upon the degree of support it elicits from member agencies and other agencies potentially affected by it. Their support is more likely to be forthcoming to the extent that the mechanism achieves internal efficiency and effectiveness and to the extent that it meets their needs and expectations.

We have already discussed some of the positive outcomes of the IRG meetings, including mutual education and surfacing issues. These would tend to strengthen commitment to the IRG mechanism. Our discussion here will review some of the criticisms of IRG meetings voiced by that group and other officials attending the meetings, which can be viewed as detracting from interagency support for the IRG.

1. One person expressed disappointment that the CASPs had not proved a vehicle for moving the IRG to become a more decisive interagency body. "Too much of the time is devoted to petty problems or dealing with the obvious. The discussions are too gentlemanly." He attributed this largely to the key issue papers which did not clearly articulate alternatives, among which the IRG might decide. He suspected that too much compromising by lower levels at pre-IRG meetings had left the IRG an "empty approval function."

2. One agency official said that he had become very skeptical of any worthwhile outcome to the cycle because of the manner in which the meetings were conducted, specifically mentioning the bilateral nature of discussions, usually involving either AID or Defense. Another member, who represented an agency with smaller resource programs, noted the same bilateral characteristic to the discussions, which made him feel like an uninvolved onlooker. He believed his agency and others could have been productively involved if time in the IRG sessions were devoted to educating the members, e.g., allowing an agency to describe or illustrate the potential for relating its programs to the objectives identified by other agencies.

3. Some persons criticized the large number of persons present at the IRG meetings--often 20-30 people. For one thing it prevented the discussion of internal security operations. It also tended to inhibit free interchange because one didn't know all who were present and because one may be more concerned about taking the time of such a large number of persons.

4. The representatives of two agencies found the discussions not relevant to their interests. Therefore the meetings to date had been unproductive for them. Both recognized the need to be included in the meetings--they just had not been too rewarded to date. Another agency representative expressed uncertainty about the purpose of the CASP, the IRG meetings, and the role of his agency.

5. For the representatives of two agencies the IRG meetings were troublesome because the CASP figures were not reliable. One representative was forced into the role of "bad-guy" because he was reluctant to give more than highly qualified approvals to CASPs in which the figures were only illustrative.

6. Many persons complained that they did not know what decisions had been made in IRG meetings and that there were no minutes of the meeting. The clear inference was that the lack of clarity about IRG decisions and the reliance upon the private notes of the chairman detracted from the interagency character of the CASP meetings. One AID-official especially felt the vagueness and generality of the IRG's decision interfered with subsequent implementation of the CASP.

7. There was satisfaction voiced that the CASP cycle was an automatic agenda-setting mechanism and reduced the likelihood that the IRG would deal with inappropriate low priority items. On the other hand at least one member was worried about exclusive attention to CASPs causing the IRG to neglect urgent and important problems not raised by the CASPs.

To the extent that the IRG did not function effectively and therefore didn't fully exploit the potential for strengthening its interagency support, the following factors appeared to be responsible: the low quality of the CASP documents, a change in the Assistant Secretary of State, the limited time and the larger number of CASPs, the decision to meet once a week and to review two CASPs per meeting (the chairman regretted that procedural decision made by the IRG), and the apparent reluctance of the chairman to take a strong hand in the meetings.

#### Overall Attitude toward Interagency Planning

What level of support exists for an interagency planning effort? There was very little expression of opposition to the interagency aspect of the CASP cycle. DOD/ISA and DOD/JCS interviewees expressed the most unqualified support for broad interagency planning mechanism in the mission, at the working level, and at the regional level. They acknowledged that this enthusiasm was not shared by many military officers who feared that interagency planning increased the civilian's influence over security matters. The CIA interviewee was similarly supportive of the type of interagency foreign affairs PPB system. In contrast, AID officials believed the CASP to be the wrong tool at the wrong time. The Peace Corps interviewee supported the general idea of interagency planning and acknowledged that his agency had interests in the process. However,



Peace Corps did not have the manpower in Washington or in the field to devote to the development of these policies through the CASP type processes. The USIA interviewee preferred a mechanism which would preserve the salience of the agency's relationship with State in particular. The comments of Commerce and Treasury officials gave general mild support to the interagency planning.

### Summary and Conclusions

The chapter takes a broad view of the CASP exercise and does not contain much material that illustrates either third party interventions or interunit dynamics. It does, however, afford an opportunity to assess how outcomes of an interagency effort can be influenced by the way the effort is structured and by certain implementing patterns. Causal relations of these types were postulated in the flow model.

The integrative potential of the CASP cycle was enhanced by virtue of the fact that it included interagency consideration of many phases of foreign affairs--from assessments of threats and opportunities in the foreign country, through formulation of U.S. objectives and assigning priorities to them, to consideration of the composition of the typically wide array of economic, social, educational, community development, informational, and military assistance programs. It was the best approximation of an interagency Planning Programming and Budgeting System that had been tried in foreign affairs. Thus, it was complementary to the day-to-day type of interagency coordination involved in program implementation in the field (Chapter 3) and at the country desk level in Washington (Chapter 4).

The study was designed to assess the probable results of the CASP cycle, especially those relevant to the integration of the foreign affairs community. Significantly, the experimental CASP cycle for the Latin American countries was the first major task undertaken by the IRG for Inter-American Affairs. The primary short-run objective was to produce a planning document that would improve plans for the year. This short-run objective was probably realized to some modest degree. There were additional longer-run objectives, secondary effects of the 1967 exercise; specifically the planning exercise tended to raise the standards of thinking about foreign affairs; promote additional interchanges between Washington and the field, and most importantly for this analysis, increase the interaction among agencies. The research for this study occurred before one could assess the impact upon the budgeting process, but hopefully some budgeting decisions in Washington were made with a better comprehension of the optional uses of funds and the interagency interests in each of those uses of funds. Overall the actual known results were positive, albeit modest. The opportunities, however, were impressive.

How do we explain the gap between potential and actual integrative results?

First, of course, one must acknowledge the role played by the predominantly negative forces in the interagency context. Because the CASPs were drafted in the overseas missions, the analysis of forces promoting and constraining coordination in Chapter 3 is generally relevant to the CASP exercise. Similarly the CASP was reviewed at the desk level in Washington so that the comments about context in Chapter 4 apply to the CASP cycle. Finally some of these additional forces identified in Chapter 5 were involved here as well because in both cases representative groups were involved in interagency planning. For example in both cases planning documents and review discussions were often deliberately ambiguous for tactical considerations--in order to choose the time and place to surface a tough interagency issue.

Second, certain basic features of the 1967 cycle affected the integrative results. The achievements were favorably influenced by the standards of rigor built into the format of the planning document requested, the fact that participation by the field was mandatory, and that field missions were assured that their documents would be read by their superiors at the assistant secretary level.

The lack of authority to shift resources via the exercise, and the perception that the Assistant Secretary of State did little to enhance the credibility of the exercise were cited as factors weakening the commitment of ambassadors and other agency officials, and in turn the quality of the planning product and the secondary integrative consequences.

Perhaps the most important limiting feature was the inadequacy of the time allotted to various activities--initial drafting, preliminary review in Washington, redrafting in the field and review by IRG. Severe time constraints helped foster (a) a "stapling" approach to drafting the document, (b) the one-on-one review procedures followed by many State Department officials for the desk level review, and (c) the two CASP per meeting workload for the IRG review.

Third, interface management activities helped account for the CASP's successes and failures. The exercise was initiated by the interagency IRG, but without very thorough exploration. Hence, the basic decision did relatively little to knit this interagency group together. A divisive factor was the belief of other agencies that they had too little opportunity to influence the guidelines which State sent to the field. Thus, other agencies were more tempted to criticize the guidelines and dissociate themselves from them.

In the field, the pattern of responses to these guidelines was mixed. Apparently in those missions where the ambassador had tried to develop a country team, this exercise promoted mutual education and strengthened the interrelationships among local programs. In some cases the CASP initiated a new and different type of interchange among agencies. In others, where the ambassador developed the paper by stapling together the separate submissions of various agency units there was no effect.

The review process included interagency consideration by desk level officials and then the IRG. The processes had some tendency to strengthen the interagency network at both levels, but more striking was the amount of opportunity missed. State largely failed to use the chairmanship roles for active leadership and for building an interagency system. Just why is not altogether clear, but several factors are involved: there was confusion within State about who had what initiative and responsibilities; this activity was added on top of other responsibilities and had to be accomplished within time constraints; lower level officials were ambivalent in their own assessment of the seriousness with which the newly formed IRG would treat the CASPs; and finally, many State officials lacked the types of chairmanship and group skills required to make effective use of the interagency groups. Also, one must question how many of the Foreign Service Officers really had the desire to take on active leadership roles in interagency groups and had the knowledge about social and economic development that they could provide intellectual leadership in developing a comprehensive foreign affairs strategy for a particular country. In Chapters 3, 4, and 5 we reviewed the strategies and tactics of three State officials who had the desire and skills to take active interagency leadership roles, but the CASP study covering all of the countries in the Latin American region convinced the author that these three were exceptions to the rule.

## CHAPTER 7

## OPERATION TOPSY - AN INTERAGENCY CHANGE EFFORT

During the summer of 1967 the United States Ambassador to Brazil decided to effect basic changes in the U.S. mission to that country. The effort was dubbed operation "Topsy" because a major premise of the Ambassador was that the mission had grown "like topsy" over the past several years. This chapter contains a brief study of Topsy with a particular focus on the interagency processes and their ramifications.<sup>1</sup>

Basic Chronology of Topsy

In mid-July the Ambassador assembled members of his country team and their subordinate section chiefs and read a telegram he intended to send to Secretary of State Dean Rusk. The communique requested support for an effort to cut personnel by as much as 50% over the next year or two. Only a few close associates of the Ambassador had seen a draft of the telegram prior to this presentation to his total staff. Apparently he had invited reactions of the Deputy Chief of Mission, a staff assistant and the Economic Minister and Director of USAID. Because he had not previously indicated that he was considering such a move, the telegram caught the mission by surprise.<sup>2</sup> At the meeting he informed his staff that he was not seeking their approval but did want them to know what he was doing and to give them a chance to make suggestions. Several members did make suggestions, some of which the Ambassador incorporated in the final draft.

The telegram dated July 21 was addressed to Secretary of State Rusk with the request that it be passed to Messrs. McNamara (Defense), Rostow (White House), Gaud (USAID), Marks (USIS), Helms (CIA) and Vaughn (Peace Corps). It called for a thorough reassessment of the type and size of organization most conducive to the attainment of U.S. objectives, noting that the U.S. Government establishment had tended to grow like topsy over the years. The Ambassador's telegram placed on the overseas mission the primary burden for the reassessment, but asserted that results could only be achieved with the wholehearted support of all interested departments and agencies in Washington. The Ambassador referred in his telegram to the political as well as management considerations that impinged upon the above organizational reassessment.

The telegram outlined the following steps: approval by the Secretary for the Ambassador to initiate in the field a thorough review of U.S. mission activities and personnel requirements with a view toward personnel cuts of up to 50% over the next year or two. If he received the approval,

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<sup>1</sup>The study was based on a visit to Rio in November, 1967, just one year after the field study for Chapter 3 was conducted.

<sup>2</sup>One signal consistent with this move was the instructions the Ambassador had issued several months earlier to the effect that there should be no increase in personnel in any agency without his explicit concurrence in each case.

he would initiate a work group in the mission representing all major agencies. The task of this group would be to restudy U.S. objectives, relate them to operations, and then suggest criteria for retrenchment or for the development of alternative U.S. activities which involved fewer personnel. He suggested that the techniques for determining specific cuts and their timing might better be assigned to a subsequent task force.

The Ambassador's telegram emphasized that he was not suggesting altering the United States' basic mission in Brazil or reducing the general magnitude of aid. He believed that by reshaping programs and organizations the same magnitude of resources could be managed more efficiently and more effectively. This could involve eliminating programs of marginal productivity, particularly in areas where AID's technical assistance has not made a real contribution.

The Ambassador's telegram noted that with substantial reductions in mission personnel a reduction in the multiple demands on the country team's resources would be required. Specifically, he hoped Washington (a) would be more selective in assigning "high priority" to additional fields of development; (b) would review its demands on the mission for special analysis and program presentations, eliminating those that are marginal or repetitious; (c) would only assign personnel who could carry the heavy load in such a streamlined organization.

Apparently the Ambassador made a visit to Washington shortly after he sent the telegram. He saw Secretary Rusk who gave him a statement of support, indirectly assuring him of the support of the President. Reportedly, McNamara and Rusk were both enthusiastic, although Gaud (Director of USAID) was "lukewarm." Upon his return, the Ambassador reiterated his conversations with the Secretary and stressed the support of the cabinet during discussions with members of the country team.

On August 8, the Ambassador sent a memorandum to all agencies and section chiefs within the mission, requesting them to estimate the effects of a 50% reduction in personnel and to report on which programs would be affected. On the same day an unclassified announcement of the organizational reassessment was distributed by the Ambassador to American personnel and released to the press. It read in part:

This is not a "meat ax" operation and I intend to see that no employee suffers any unnecessary hardship as a result. In most cases programs determined to be of limited value can simply be phased out or modified when the tours of the present personnel come to an end....

I do not anticipate that our review will entail any cut in the general magnitude of our aid programs or any change in our policy and objectives in Brazil. In fact I anticipate that we will, of course, necessitate some change in our method of operating and will undoubtedly involve eliminating marginal programs and modifying others. On the other hand, our review may also result in expansion of certain programs that we think are particularly valuable to the achievement of our mission.

Over the next two weeks the Ambassador received the submissions from agency heads and section chiefs. Most of the submissions disagreed with the Ambassador's view that they could absorb a 50% cut without curtailing existing U.S. policies and objectives in Brazil; they predicted severe consequences of such a deep cut.

In an airgram to Washington, dated August 30, the Ambassador reported the results of the staff's first efforts to critically review their activities. The airgram confirmed that the Ambassador still regarded the 50% cut as a conservative objective; that all major agencies must have essentially the same target regarding size and timing of the reduction; that this objective would require the termination and change of a number of U.S. programs; and that the reduction would require an extraordinary and careful control in Washington of all requests to the field and personnel proposals.

The August 30 airgram indicated that the 50% reduction was based on a continued orthodox mission and alluded to a more far reaching concept of an "Ideal Embassy" which could be comprised of still fewer very skillful, adaptable military and civilian officers, selected without regard to agency.

Finally, the airgram included the submissions from agency heads and section chiefs together with the Ambassador's comments and rebuttals. The Ambassador was especially dissatisfied with the military group's response including what he considered an exaggerated estimate of the importance of the activities which would be curtailed in the event of a 50% reduction in personnel.

By the middle of September concrete plans were under way for a Washington task force to depart for Brazil. The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Administration in the State Department was recruiting a team comprised of members of the major agencies involved. Their purpose was to review the submissions and make supplementary recommendations based on an examination of every section and agency in the field. By this time, the Ambassador had made it clear that the task force would report to him -- he would serve as its head.

The Washington Evening Star carried a news item which reported on the status of Operation Topsy and attempted to interpret the political significance of the Ambassador's moves for U.S.-Brazilian relations. (See Table 7.) In particular, the article suggested that the U.S. embassy and the Brazilian government were trying to diminish the degree of U.S. influence and type of U.S. involvement in Brazilian decision making.<sup>3</sup>

The news item is pertinent also because its approving tone and content reflected the type of public support available for the Ambassador's change effort. The President and agency heads were aware of the type of applause with which such actions generally would be greeted.

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<sup>3</sup>The Washington Evening Star (39).

Table 7.J

NEWS ITEM ON OPERATION TOPSY IN THE  
WASHINGTON EVENING STAR, OCTOBER 31, 1967

50-Percent Cut in Brazil Staff May Serve as Global Test

**FIFTY-PERCENT CUT IN UNITED STATES BRAZIL  
STAFF MAY SERVE AS GLOBAL TEST**

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.—Ambassador John W. Tuthill has launched Operation Topsy, which aims to cut the sprawling U.S. diplomatic, aid and military roster in Brazil by 50 percent within the next year or two.

Tuthill has been given official approval to begin pruning half of the 1,000 Americans affiliated with the embassy. His plans do not affect the 700 Peace Corps volunteers or, for the time being, the 1,200 Brazilians who work for the U.S. here.

When "Topsy" gets into full swing, informed sources believe it will be used by all affected agencies as a textbook for performing similar surgery all over the world.

Informed sources say the huge buildup of U.S. representatives grew like Topsy over recent years and found Americans involved in nearly every phase of Brazilian official and cultural life.

**FREE-WHEELING NOTED**

Some second level officials of the embassy were acting as if they were ministers of the various Brazilian government departments

and expected the ambassador to function like a prime minister. They proliferated so rapidly under the previous government of President Humberto Castelo Branco that it required several skyscrapers in Rio and innumerable square footage of office and residential space over the nation to contain them.

Tuthill decided something had to be done last July. He started by ordering no new jobs for Americans in Brazil without his express approval.

Perhaps his attitude took final form when he, and all ambassadors around the world, received an official cable from Washington ordering that they look into the need for a study in each country of the impact of bats, rodents and "noxious birds." A copy of this cable, with all its imposing array of signatures and clearances, is framed in Tuthill's office.

The ambassador notified Washington of his conviction and asked permission to conduct an official review for the 50 percent cut. From Secretary of State Dean Rusk came a laconic, "Go ahead." USIA Director Leonard Marks indicated the Brazil staff could be cut 75 percent if Tuthill so desired.

**MILITARY RELUCTANT**

There was some foot-dragging by the military mission, which maintains a fleet consisting of one C54, two C47s and a Convair. They warned darkly that the proposed cut-back would mean the end of the PX, the commissary, the embassy airline and other services. Tuthill simply replied, "good."

The six-man study group is here now, under Tuthill's chairmanship, and will return its proposals for his scrutiny next month. Officials explained that there will be no meat-ax elimination of manpower but rather a process of attrition as contracts of AID employees end.

Tuthill can work a little faster with the diplomatic staff, roughly 18 percent of the total. Part of his pruning will be elimination of several consulates in backwaters of Brazil where trained diplomats do little more than stamp visas and provide an American presence.

Castelo Branco was closely aligned with the U.S. and depended on Americans for many functions that Brazilians should have been performing. The public posture of the government of President Arthur da Costa e Silva is quite different.

**OWN DECISIONS STRESSED**

The new government is no less interested in U.S. economic and military aid and private investment, but Costa e Silva's stress is on independent decisions on basic questions without influence by the Americans.

Tuthill is completely of a mind to reduce this influence, despite grumbling from lower down on the embassy pyramid. He is willing to let Brazilians make mistakes and it is difficult to argue with the idea that if the Americans remain deeply enmeshed in Brazilian affairs, the U.S. will inherit the blame for such errors as are made.

It is clear that most of the pruning will affect the AID mission and its technical assistance programs, of which 12 have been tagged "high priority" over the last two years.

**LOCAL DISCRETION**

As far as "noxious birds" directives from Washington are concerned, the embassy now is replying to them by slow boat mail and exercising local discretion, which is a polite way of ignoring them.

The reduction-in-force plan has been fully communicated to the Brazilian government so it will understand there is no lessening of interest with the nation's well-being. The Brazilians approve wholeheartedly.

And it is not peanuts so far as the Tuthill project is concerned. If it costs \$30,000 to train, transport and support the average embassy employee for one year, Tuthill will be saving \$15 million for the Treasury. The usual tour is two or more years, which raises the saving to \$30 million.

The Washington task force for Operation Topsy began arriving in Brazil in October. Four members arrived within the period of a few days and began the task of clarifying both their own and the Ambassador's expectations and of organizing themselves to perform their work. Apparently, substantial stress developed within the task force team during the early period of its formation.

By October 30, the team was comprised of officials from the following agencies: (a) State-INR, who served as the group coordinator; (b) AID, including one person presently in the agency and one person who recently had left the agency to join a university faculty, both of whom had previously worked in the mission in Rio; (c) DOD, a retired general; and (d) USIS. Within the next two weeks the group was joined by another State Department official from the Budget and Compliance office and another official from the Department of Defense. At about the same time the two officials with AID background departed.

The task force interviewed agency directors, section chiefs and other persons whom they believed could provide information regarding the implications of personnel reductions. Interviews were accomplished by teams of two task force members, always including an official affiliated with the agency whose operations were being scrutinized and an official from another agency. On the basis of these interviews, the task force prepared its recommendations to the Ambassador.

By the end of November, the task force had submitted its interim report to the Ambassador, recommending a cut of about 37%. That happened shortly after the end of their field investigation on which the present study is based.

The further steps in Topsy appeared to be the following:

1. The Ambassador would decide upon cuts he would request for each agency.
2. Each agency director in the mission would have an opportunity to register his agreement or disagreement.
3. The requests would go to Washington where they would be reviewed by the respective agencies involved. If an agency believed that cuts were unwise, the reductions would not be put into effect by the agency. In such a case, the Ambassador could attempt to fight the issue up to Washington hierarchies, until the differences could be resolved.

#### The Potential for Interagency Coordination and System Building

In its most obvious terms, Topsy was an effort to increase efficiency by reducing manpower and eliminating the minimally productive activities. According to the news item in Table 7.1 the action may have had the additional political rationale of reducing certain types of U.S. involvement in Brazil which contained growing political liabilities under the Costa e Silva government. Viewed strictly in these terms the interest here



would be in the interagency influence exercised by a State Department official. It is a case of an Ambassador attempting to exercise influence severely affecting most of the large agencies which comprise the mission to Brazil. Thus, one can examine the political and organizational aspects of the Ambassador's influence efforts.

In addition, Topsy had implications for interagency conflict resolution and system building, and although not as prominent in discussions of Topsy, these implications were part of the Ambassador's purposes:

First, Topsy could accomplish trade-offs between agencies in achieving the same objectives (e.g. between USIS, Peace Corps and AID in achieving objectives of showing U.S. concern and in helping Brazilians in solving their own problems.) For example, this would be accomplished if the programs related to certain objectives in one agency are judged marginal and cut back drastically while programs related to these same objectives in another agency are left intact or expanded. This would effectively accomplish a type of interagency trade-off for which there is no regular mechanism, and which the CASP (discussed in Chapter 6) was explicitly designed to facilitate but did not accomplish--at least with respect to Brazil.

Second, the effort could force a redefinition of the boundaries of agencies in the mission or an integration of some of their activities (e.g., between different intelligence groups; or among the military groups such as the service attaches and the military assistance groups; or among those with economic reporting and analysis functions, such as the Economic Counselor, and officials in AID Treasury and Agriculture). The sharp reduction in manpower not only forced the weeding out of marginally useful activities, but also the consolidation of redundant ones. The Ambassador's thinking for the future went still further. The effectiveness of the streamlined organization would be dependent upon an upgrading of mission personnel in terms of dedication, sensitivity and innovativeness. But the Ambassador's "Ideal Embassy," characterized in his August 30 airgram would represent the ultimate in integration of the foreign affairs apparatus overseas.

Third, Topsy afforded the State Department a strong influence on the program emphasis of other agencies (e.g. AID's reliance on loans versus direct technical assistance.). Generally, those program activities which require fewer U.S. personnel per million dollars of program assistance were to be favored over those with a higher personnel component. However, because the Ambassador could involve other criteria for judging program expendability, such as the assessment of the productivity of the program this manpower intensity factor could be emphasized selectively.

Fourth, Topsy included an attempt to reduce reporting requirements and other demands Washington places upon the field. These demands are not only time consuming and distracting but also, in subtle ways, encourage sterile rather than creative thinking. These demands also have the effect of continuously reinforcing an agency official's orientation to his agency superiors in Washington at the expense of his orientation to the mission and its objectives which his unit shares with other agencies in Brazil. Thus to reduce Washington demands on the field is to open up more opportunity for interagency influence at the mission level.

Fifth, all of the above had the further implication of giving reality to the concept of the U.S. mission as a system related to some coherent set of U.S. goals. To the extent that Topsy resulted in substantial reductions, it would demonstrate the effective power and leadership of the Ambassador. In addition, the concept of a system (rather than a collection of autonomous units) would be furthered to the extent that Topsy, as a precedent, established mission-wide standards of efficiency and management effectiveness; created mission-wide awareness of individual responsibility to avoid political blunders; forced intra-agency review of their own programs in terms of the overall mission objectives.

In the author's judgment, based on the observations made during a visit to Rio in November, 1967, and the reports received from the task force members after they returned to Washington, these functions of interagency integration were accomplished in some dimensions and the limited progress (at least initially) in other dimensions of interagency integration were in part results of the dilemmas involved in the Ambassador's change strategies. Further, the change process involved at least temporary setbacks in terms of some aspects of interagency relations in the mission. These are explored below.

#### The Ambassador's Interagency Strategies and Their Dilemmas

The overall assessment developed here revolves around the dilemmas between political logics and organizational logics. On the one hand, the Ambassador's strategies and tactics were effective in terms of the politics of interagency relationships and the hierarchical politics of bureaucracies. Hence he ensured the success of the personnel cuts that were a part of his objectives for Operation Topsy. Many in the mission agreed:

I couldn't improve on his strategy. The fact is that you don't get anything done by committees, survey, etc. Given long tenured bureaucrats and their instinct for protecting themselves, it takes something like his crude, cold, bold approach in directive form. He was clever: First, he announced his views. Then he went directly to the top, so that he could present his views as endorsed by the cabinet, and hence U.S. policy. The task force of this calibre helped convey the seriousness of the approach; not just another of the endless reviews.

The Ambassador used the 50% reduction figure in Washington. He shocked the mission into the realization that he was serious. He caught the attention of Washington. And he got things rolling here.

On the other hand, the Ambassador's strategies and tactics had costs in terms of his own mission organization, which in turn raised questions about the achievement of some of the more subtle and longer-term purposes of Operation Topsy. This theme of the political-organizational dilemmas is pursued in the following detailed analysis of the change strategies of Topsy.

### Choosing an Emphasis

By focusing on the reduction in personnel, the Ambassador secured the support from the top which he required in order to get serious movement on such a large and difficult undertaking. This was possible because the reduction of personnel is a purpose that can be readily visualized and appreciated by top officials. Moreover by focusing on a tangible and measurable purpose, he chose a point around which his determination could be credibly established in Washington and in the mission.

The dilemma is that this emphasis contributed to the view of Topsy as a negative exercise, which in turn had a discouraging effect on those in his mission who could have been enlisted for the more "positive" inter-agency purposes. The comments of two capable AID officials illustrate the views of those who were disappointed with the emphasis given by the Ambassador:

Yes, AID is too big and sprawling. But that is not as important as the fact that we don't have good concepts of how to effectively transfer skills and resources. No one felt the technical assistance model made sense in Brazil. It's not like a backward country where you teach the natives to use fertilizer. Our technicians have the typical American blinders and language barriers; they are not equipped with any concept of social change; in brief, they are only technicians. They cannot be agents of change -- which is the nature of the problem. Well, in any event, we saw Topsy like this: it was a chance to do something about these deficiencies in our present approach. But we still are uninformed and don't have a good basis on which to select and design programs that meet political and economic realities.

He has started us on an exercise. We saw possibilities but wanted to amend his approach. We tried to say to him "If you are only trying to make it smaller, you might wind up doing the same thing not as well."

Our pitch was to create a professional organization that would confront the key issues, e.g. (a) devising means to reach U.S. objectives in Brazil without meddling; (b) devising strategies to ensure that we are in contact with the right people in Brazil; (c) finding ways to tell Washington that the mission can't set priorities in advance; and that they can't be shifted at will, e.g., this week youth is #1 priority because Senator Kennedy is coming down; labor will be next month as Meany steps into the picture. We need to spot opportunities and to take advantage of them. Local autonomy (or influence) is important.

### Formulating the Targets

The way the Ambassador formulated targets for Operation Topsy had important implications for both his political strategy and the state of the relations within this mission.

First, consider the level of abstraction at which the problem was attacked. By directly emphasizing an action such as reduction in force, rather than encouraging a preliminary review of U.S. interests in Brazil leading to a statement of the terms of reference for the reduction, the Ambassador avoided unnecessary semantical problems, debates, etc., which could have allowed Topsy to become bogged down.

Second, is the matter of timing. By specifying an objective of 50% reduction at the outset, the Ambassador to some extent shifted the burden of proof to the agencies to suggest why this was not appropriate or feasible and to set forth what the consequences would be. Thus, those who knew the most about the detailed activities of a section or agency had an incentive to make available relevant information upon which final evaluation could be based.

Third, he could have suggested identical or different targets for the agencies which comprised the mission. By stressing the same 50% target for almost all agencies involved the Ambassador somewhat minimized the overtones of criticism. This decreased the extent to which agencies felt singled out and therefore lessened their defensiveness. Moreover, by looking at all or most agencies at the same time, he could get a substantial chorus of agreement and support for the overall effort.

The dilemma is that these aspects of the Ambassador's approach tended to be seen by many in the mission as arbitrary, unreasonable and involving prejudgment. The initial blanket approach raised the spectre of a "meat ax" and had an adverse effect on morale of many personnel that Topsy was not being conducted in a logical manner reduced their confidence in the eventual outcome. Consider the illustrative comments from a member of the U.S. mission:

Although the Ambassador has said I don't want a meat ax approach, his action was precipitous. I don't see how you can, off the top of your hat, say 50%. It is ass-backward, contrary to all principles of organization. This way it is not until the end of your run that you see what you've eliminated. Rather you should take the job you are doing, see whether you can do it more efficiently. Then you should list the objectives and priorities. Then you can see where you want to bleed, and how much you want to bleed.

#### Level of Targets

By making the proposed cut deep enough, the Ambassador shifted the emphasis from pointing the finger at an agency or section engaged in expendable activities, to the more instructive task of starting with what is essential.

There were no mission-wide priorities set by the Ambassador. But we established priorities in our unit. And we did this with more discipline than usual. It was because the severity of the reduction forced us to start with the question "what would our agency do in Brazil if we couldn't do anything else?" In contrast with the CASP and country plan, you find things and a rationale to keep busy the people you already have.

There is an interesting paradox here. A proposed cut of 10% would have resulted in less basic reviews, but the reviews would have been more unpleasant, at least for some people. Moreover, by identifying at the outset such an ambitious but still credible cut, he was able to make concessions and allow some agencies to claim success in influencing the final outcome. Attitudes may have been better in the final analysis.

#### Enlisting Support and Ideas

By utilizing an interagency task force from Washington, the Ambassador could expect to get a more objective review of the local mission situation. Also, if the members were coopted to his effort, he could get additional support for Topsy in Washington when the task force members returned there. On the other hand, by relying on the task force he didn't utilize the resources of many people in the mission who believed they could contribute to the purposes and methods of Topsy. Moreover, by not including and utilizing them more, the effect was to lose the initial and the potential enthusiastic support they represented. This refers to many whose contribution was undoubtedly desired by the Ambassador including those persons who stated:

I think that the Ambassador made a tactical mistake in acting quickly. He did it, of course, before the opposition could gel. However, he prematurely precluded an effort to get more people on board in his own mission. Calling in the task force, well that was absurd, at least in terms of timing. He could have used the task force after he used the local people to try to go to work and find solutions to the problems he identified. Then the task force could have sprinkled the program with holy water .... As it is the Ambassador has antagonized many of his natural allies. I now have no stake in this. I can't do anything for the Ambassador. He has taken the problem and given it to the task force.

The real danger is that he will chase away the good people. My hope for an upgrading of personnel is modest.

Does Topsy make this mission a less exciting assignment? That's an embarrassing question, I'm not going to stick my neck out!

#### Handling Differences

By emphasizing that the goals of Topsy are United States policy, the Ambassador discouraged what might have been non-productive maneuvering and overt defensiveness in the mission. On the other hand, personnel became very shy about initiating constructive dialogue around differences in methods, tactics and emphasis. Three comments illustrate the point:

There is no up and down dialogue. The Ambassador has laid out the ground rules in such a way that one can't engage in a dialogue of the issues I've just discussed with you. He has said, "You are free to dissent, but in writing with supervisor present, preferably." It's now no longer his own policy; but

it has been identified with all agencies of the U.S. Government. It is now considered a matter of loyalty. So he says, "If some-one can't live with this policy, it will be possible to arrange transfers."

He wanted discussion, but no bad news. He wanted punctuation to his views. No one can risk taking issue with him; no one will. Once he had indicated where he came out, no one thought of fighting it.

In an organization like this when you get a decision from the top with as much support as the Ambassador has from Washington, you are not going to get dissent or challenge, regardless of how potentially constructive and provocative the dissent might appear to be.

#### Observations on the Interagency Task Force

The task force was an important aspect of the Ambassador's change strategy. Moreover, it is of special interest here because it was an interagency instrument and because its operations involved another set of interagency processes. Task force team members were selected considering their familiarity with U.S. activities in the country in question, reputation for independent thinking, credibility with their own agency; and availability for the time period in question.

We have already indicated that the outside task force was used to provide, or at least suggest, an independent review of the Ambassador's targets so that appropriate adjustments could be made. Those interviewed reported a mixture of optimism and pessimism regarding this function. Some cited the fact that the Ambassador made himself formal chairman of the task force. They felt this indicated that they could expect nothing more from the task force than ratification of his views. Some contended that what the task force could learn about the various agency units and their respective activities during a short period of time in Rio would not enable intelligent judgments about the appropriate size of the reduction for each unit. Those who were more optimistic, however, noted that the task force created a forum for those who wanted to influence the outcome of Operation Topsy but who had no opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Ambassador. They hoped that the task force would play some third party role creating discussion and attention to considerations that weren't currently subject to dialogue between the Ambassador and members of the mission. They were encouraged by the fact that the task force members were accessible, were receptive, and appeared to be dedicated individuals. While some were impressed by the high level of bureaucrats who comprised the task force, others were disappointed that the team membership was not of a higher calibre.

A second intended function of the task force, also mentioned above, was that it would provide interagency support for the Topsy cuts. If the task force members concurred with the Ambassador they could be very useful representatives inside the major bureaucracies in Washington after they returned there.

This temporary, outside, expert, interagency task force had other potential functions as well. For example, they might share some of the hostility directed toward the Ambassador from his own mission personnel. Perhaps the task force would be associated with the most unpleasant phase of the "numbers game," and when this was concluded and they departed, the Ambassador could encourage more dialogue and mutual influence in redesigning the mission organization. The research didn't determine whether anything like this entered into the Ambassador's thinking.

The task force's involvement also helped pace Operation Topsy. Their limited availability and their instruction to come up with a written report provided a means of ensuring that the process would not drag on, which it might have done if the process was wholly within the control of persons permanently on the scene.

Task force members also served a mediating function, giving friendly counsel to agency members about how they could cope with the large demand for reductions imposed on them by the Ambassador.

One key element influencing the effectiveness of the task force was the internal relations among members of the interagency task force which could have been the subject of a study in itself. Members of the group were under extreme pressure. They were subject to influence attempts and loyalty bids from many different sources. They each had an agency identification. Some had received instructions from their respective agencies before they left Washington. Members of the mission expected a sympathetic hearing from the team in general, and special consideration from the task force member who had the same agency affiliation. Thus, the task force members' daily task was stressful, since they were interviewing members of the mission who generally resented the effort. They each felt the weight of the formal responsibility to the Ambassador which they had accepted in taking the assignment. Moreover, their job was not well defined; for example, the extent of their authority vis-à-vis the Ambassador was less than many had at first expected. On the one hand, they reported to him--he was the formal chairman of the task force; on the other hand, they could serve him and the interests of the U.S. by developing their own independent appraisal of the possibilities for substantially reducing the personnel in the various agencies. Nevertheless to the extent that their appraisal differed from that of the Ambassador, they would have to enter into intensive deliberations with him in an attempt to arrive at a common position.

The task force members working in Rio found themselves in a sort of social isolation: They were separated from their respective Washington offices, they were located in a foreign capital without their respective families; their relationships with the local mission personnel were awkward given that they were evaluating the latter and their respective activities; and they were ambivalent in the way they wanted to relate to the Ambassador. The matrix of conflicting expectations and the related social isolation combined to encourage internal group development.

With the help of the informal leadership of the State-INR official who served as the team's coordinator, the interagency task force coalesced as a group and provided its members with (a) social-emotional support, including diversion, laughter, joking, light-hearted fellowship; (b) confirmation and validation of the importance of the task in the face of

opposition from those interviewed; (c) courage to disagree with the Ambassador; (d) a forum in which to discuss and test their individual findings and conclusions. The group tried to remain as independent of the office of Chief of Mission as possible in its daily operation, in part in order to preserve their members' own personal sense of integrity and in part to avoid being too closely associated with the Ambassador.

Another key issue was the members' commitment to the task force effort. There were mixed forces here. It was an assignment stated largely in negative terms; to determine how much the U.S. overseas personnel and activities can be cut without significantly affecting U.S. interests. It was nevertheless a potentially important assignment. The idea of cutting back our overseas establishment was in the winds, with strong support from the White House. This might turn out to be the pilot effort and if it could be accomplished intelligently by close review of each agency in the mission, then that pattern might be followed elsewhere rather than some fixed quota or "meat ax" approach, arbitrarily applied to all agencies in all overseas missions. There is always some flattery in being selected for an important assignment-- and this applied here. Moreover, bureaucrats often find new energy and interest for tasks that are out of the normal bureaucratic routine. Once these task force members were in the field and insulated from their other regular work, they could be singleminded about the task force.

#### A Consulting Report

This study of Operation Topsy was based on a limited exposure to the situation just before the task force had completed its work. At the request of the Ambassador the author reported to him his diagnosis and recommendations regarding the organizational climate in the mission as it was affected by, and in turn could affect, Operation Topsy. In particular what was reported in writing included an explanation of the dilemmas of political influence and internal organizational cooperation, along the lines of the above analysis. Among other things, the report recommended:

The above analysis leads me to confirm rather than second guess on the basic strategy and tactics of Topsy. Nevertheless, given my recent interviewing, I am persuaded that it would be worth focusing on some of the costs and dilemmas created by these strategies and tactics and exploring ways of minimizing them.

I believe there is still a sizeable reservoir of competent people who could be brought into some supportive, contributing alignment with you, persons who are now indifferent, bored, disbelieving or hostile. This could be accomplished by two types of steps. First, giving renewed emphasis on the multiple premises and purposes such as set forth above, provided this is also accompanied by more refinement of these purposes. Second, enlisting a group within the mission to help provide ideas and leadership in achieving these purposes.

I believe that many of the conflicting perceptions about Topsy which I have encountered in the mission occur because you may not be aware of how others are reading what you say. One misperception which comes to mind is, again, regarding



the positive aspects of Topsy; these just have not registered to a great many people. A second misperception concerns what types of disagreement and dialogue regarding Topsy you believe appropriate and would judge to be within existing policy. I assume that there is more reticence than you intend.

At the level of tactics, it might be advantageous at an early date to secure some visible, symbolic relief from the bureaucratic requirements of Washington-- earnest money, so to speak. This could go some distance in increasing the credibility of Topsy in this respect.

In a communication from the Ambassador the author learned that as a result of the report, the Ambassador took steps the following week to emphasize the more constructive and subtle aspects of the goals of Operation Topsy and to enlist the assistance of those in the mission who could contribute to these goals. Later, the staff assistant reported further on these initiatives of the Ambassador indicating that they produced some positive results.

### Summary and Conclusions

#### Flow Model

In terms of the flow model, this case illustrates how the structure of an integrative effort and the subtle choices in managing agency interfaces influence the outcomes.

To get perspective on the ingredients of Operation Topsy, we can compare it with the CASP exercise. The two exercises shared two larger purposes, namely to promote profound program reassessment at the country level and to help build a coherent system from the interagency community. We have referred in Chapters 4 and 5 to tactical considerations which constrained participants for surfacing issues in the policy planning group and the CASP. This case provides support for the idea that agencies may prefer to raise issues in an ad hoc manner, in settings and at times that fit the political terrain of the bureaucracy, rather than in routinized interagency programs. In fact the Ambassador undertook Operation Topsy just a few months after he had appeared before the IRG in the scheduled review of the Brazil CASP. It is reasonable to assume that the concerns and ideas which underlay Operation Topsy were already in the Ambassador's mind during the CASP cycle; and that he consciously chose not to use the CASP as a vehicle for the profound change effort he contemplated. Yet, the CASP was intended as a vehicle for just such fundamental reassessments.

Some contrasts in the structure and management of these two efforts are salient to the Ambassador's choice:

#### Operation Topsy

Political logics; e.g. oriented to a particular constraint, the size of mission

#### CASP Exercise

Program logics; e.g. oriented to balanced statement of objectives

Initiated by Ambassador;  
other agencies report re-  
actions to the Ambassador;  
even the Washington task  
force reported to Ambassador

Used interagency process for  
draft, review, approval

Initiator went to the top;  
secured approval and then went  
to work on own mission and  
middle levels of federal  
bureaucracy

Papers, including proposed  
changes, if any, were worked  
up through the hierarchy;  
(possible for opposition to  
develop before one gets to top)

Ad hoc; attention focused on  
uniqueness

Routinized; CASPS needs to be handled  
similarly to all others and to  
share attention with all other  
efforts

Timing of steps under the  
control of the initiator

Timing predetermined

The above contrasts partly explain the different types of outcomes from Topsy and the first cycle of CASP: (a) Topsy, unlike CASP, tended to enhance the image of assertive leadership on the part of the State Department; (b) Topsy had relatively more certain effect on program emphasis within other agencies and on trade-offs between agencies; (c) Topsy -- at least during the early period -- tended to deepen rivalries and create new divisions in the mission, whereas the CASP tended to knit the interagency community, albeit in a spotty way; (d) CASP reinforced participants' interest in interagency assessment of plans and programs, but Topsy probably did not.

#### Interaction Dynamics and Third Party Roles

In terms of the interaction model, Topsy illustrates the effect of bargaining decision making on the affective quality of relationships. Reference to the contrasting behaviors instrumental for bargaining and problem solving set forth in Chapter 2 will quickly confirm that tacit bargaining characterized the decision making between the Ambassador on the one hand and the mission personnel and the middle levels of the federal bureaucracy on the other. There were tendencies:

- (a) to overstate goals and preferences (e.g. level of reduction acceptable);
- (b) to include low priority objectives as trading horses (e.g. a party's bid to eliminate or keep programs when it was really ready to concede the point);
- (c) to state the agenda in terms of alternate solutions rather than underlying problems or objectives (e.g., stating the objective in terms of achieving certain reductions in personnel rather than in terms of the need to weed out marginal or politically risky programs or to reduce U.S. visibility);

(d) to act unilaterally in ways which coerce or surprise the other (e.g., the Ambassador's surprise announcement followed by a quick solicitation of the support of two influential Cabinet members.)

The theory hypothesizes that bargaining tactics would frustrate any efforts to problem solve and would create identity conflict. In fact, problem solving was made more difficult. The effective bargaining tactic of becoming publicly committed to an operational (measurable) position like the size of the intended personnel cut created a sense of arbitrariness that reduced the tendency for others to engage in a problem-solving exercise. The Ambassador's quick move for support from the top and the declaration of the stated program targets as official United States policy, increased compliance at the mission level but also tended to shut off constructive dialogue. The task force which allowed for some mediative processes was necessary given the essentially bargaining framework which existed, but it also tended to preclude problem solving between the Ambassador and his "natural allies" in the mission.

Similarly, as we have emphasized above, these bargaining tactics had their deteriorating effect on relationships. In identity terms, the Ambassador effectively ignored those who identified themselves as his "natural allies" rather than confirming that identity. Also, his influence pattern effectively rejected those who wanted to be a part of a "loyal but active opposition." Although in the longer run the Ambassador sought a closer-knit team, his tactics tended to deny team identification. Identity conflict was certainly created when members of the mission found themselves and the program in which they may have had considerable pride declared marginal and readily expendable.

The Ambassador was a third party in relationship to the implicit and explicit competition and rivalry among agencies. Although a uniform target of a 50% reduction was initially stated by the Ambassador, inevitably some agencies were going to be cut more deeply than others. Chapter 2 hypothesizes that the intervention strategy of directly resolving the issues is facilitated when the third party has moderate to high power, high knowledge of issues and principals, and high balance in his orientation. In fact, the intervention would not have had any chance of success if the Ambassador had not skillfully secured cabinet level support for his program, greatly enhancing his effective power over other agency officials regarding the change program. Also, the Ambassador was regarded as having a balanced orientation -- there were no charges of systematic bias for or against any particular agency. However, members of the mission did express doubt that the Ambassador had sufficient knowledge of the many programs of the mission to make good judgments about which should be cut, and which should be preserved intact or expanded.

Because the Ambassador's massive influence was resisted by many agency personnel, he was also a principal to conflict. Here the conflict was more in terms of how deep the average cut would be, rather than which agency would be most effected. With respect to this conflict, the task force was a third party. Again, at least officially, the task force was expected to contribute directly to the resolution of the substance of the issue. To do so effectively, they would have to be knowledgeable, neutral and at least moderately powerful vis-à-vis the Ambassador as well as the mission personnel. Many, including some task force members, felt they were not sufficiently independent of the Ambassador to effectively make this type of third party intervention.

The task force did perform one version of another type of third party intervention, to the extent that they buffered the relations between irate mission personnel and the resolute Ambassador. They allowed for some ventilation of feelings and active influence attempts and hence helped resist somewhat the tendency for relationships to deteriorate further.

As the chapter emphasizes, the Ambassador's strategy appeared to be effective in achieving its more tangible objective of a drastic personnel cut, but at some expense in the quality of interagency relationships in the mission. The consultant's diagnostic interviewing of the members of the mission and subsequent recommendations to the Ambassador were parts of an intervention designed to help improve the positivity of the relationship via diagnostic insight.

## CHAPTER 8

## A MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR AN INTERAGENCY URBAN PROGRAM

Our treatment of interagency processes shifts focus in two respects. We turn from foreign affairs to urban affairs, and we examine for the first time interagency management, including not only planning but implementation processes. The object of the study is the federal management system for the Neighborhood Center Pilot Program, which was a forerunner of the Model Cities Program.<sup>1</sup> The study covers the period from August 1966, when the program was launched, to March 1968, when the field investigation was concluded.

Overview of the NCPPThe Neighborhood Centers Concept

In recent years there has been a growing realization that the social problems of cities must be attacked by an approach that comprehends the whole person within his social and physical environment. We can gain some appreciation of the need to develop new delivery systems for social services by referring to a document of the NCPP. It is these needs to which the neighborhood center concept is responsive.

Most persons need a multiplicity of services (health, education, employment, legal, etc.) but often services are scattered throughout the community, and many agencies tend to view a client's problems narrowly without concern for the total needs of the individual. This leads to confusion and discontinuity in the delivery of services. Moreover, the alienation, fear and apathy of many low-income families is reinforced by the formal atmosphere of many agencies which require the making of appointments, long waits for service, or repeated visits. Many agencies are not prepared to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of low-income families in periods of crisis.

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<sup>1</sup>This chapter is based on an evaluation study conducted by NTL-Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences and for the Bureau of the Budget. The author served as technical director for the project. The technical reports of that study were authored jointly with Professor Lewis Welch, State University of New York at Albany, to whom I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness. The investigation involved review and analysis of a large number of documents produced throughout the history of the program, interviews with about eighty officials drawn from all of the federal elements of the system, and interviews with twenty city, state and community representatives.

These problems have stimulated, both within government and the private sector, a growing concern about the quality of services provided and how they can be made more effective and meaningful. There is increasing recognition that new solutions and imaginative approaches must be tried if the needs of the disadvantaged are to be fulfilled.

The neighborhood center concept offers an opportunity for overcoming part of the problem of compartmentalization, lack of responsiveness, and dispersion of services in urban areas. To meet the needs of disadvantaged areas on a permanent and comprehensive basis, a wide range of services should be decentralized to the neighborhood level, and services should be affirmed in the context of a single complex or one-stop service center. The concentrating and co-locating of services in such a center would result in increased convenience for the user, better access to services, greater continuity of services, increased agency efficiency, and rationalization of the provision of services. Furthermore, in assisting in the development of a viable neighborhood organization and involving the recipients of services in the planning and decision-making processes, the responsiveness of services can be improved and the recipients can be given an opportunity to develop their own abilities and resources.

The direct lineal descendant of the settlement house of the 19th century, the neighborhood service center concept, was revived by the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and by emphasis in the Community Action Program on Neighborhood Centers. Some 200 Community Action agencies have established neighborhood centers in their communities.<sup>2</sup>

The neighborhood centers contemplated by the NCPP were to be more ambitious, embracing more social services than those launched by OEO. They would involve the full range of Great Society programs.

The Neighborhood Center Pilot Program was initiated in response to the request of President Johnson (in a speech at Syracuse, New York, on August 19, 1966), for the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development "to set as his goal the establishment, in every ghetto in America, of a neighborhood center to service the people who live in that area."

In consultation with other federal agencies, HUD initially prepared an estimate of the costs to meet the literal mandate of the President. When it was determined by the White House and the Bureau of the Budget that an effort of this scale could not be financed, HUD was instructed to mount a limited

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<sup>2</sup>"A Guide for the Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program" (33), draft, pp. 1-3.

pilot program which could be funded within the existing or anticipated appropriation levels of each of the participating agencies. In effect the Presidential mandate became whatever the White House Staff and Bureau of the Budget (BOB) were capable of negotiating with the participating departments, i.e., Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), and Labor. Through this process, the Presidential objectives became defined in terms of a fourteen-city pilot program to install quickly an integrated service system (core services and linkages), operating from a neighborhood center facility. The program was intergovernmental in concept, involving federal, state, county, city and private agencies, and some neighborhood residents, but their respective roles in initiation and consultation were yet to be defined. However, from the outset, it was apparent that the Pilot Program was to be funded by the participating federal agencies from existing appropriations and managed by interagency groups in Washington and in the field. Although there was some initial confusion about lead responsibility, HUD was named to lead the program. HUD's substantive contribution to the Program was assistance for physical facilities, which could be provided under HUD's Neighborhood Facility Program (HUD 703).

Thus, the Neighborhood Center Pilot Program provided one test of the capacity of the federal government to mobilize its organizational and fiscal resources in such a way as to produce a coordinated approach on a complex problem area.

#### Obtaining Interagency Participation

Before the President's August 19 speech, the Bureau of the Budget had been leading an interagency review and evaluation of neighborhood center concepts and experiments. This interagency effort had produced a general design for a pilot test of various neighborhood center models. It was this design which was offered to HUD by BOB as an appropriate format for the pilot program response to the President's request.

Under the Convenor Order recently issued to HUD by the President, HUD organized an interagency committee, including representatives of HEW, Labor, OEO, BOB and HUD, to assist with the development and operation of the pilot program. The fourteen pilot cities were selected by HUD in consultation with BOB and OEO. Pilot city mayors were furnished brief program descriptions which conceptually reflected the work of the earlier BOB interagency study, but which did not reflect unanimous approval of the HUD-convened interagency committee. In late 1966, the regional offices of the participating federal agencies were informed of the pilot program and were invited to designate members of field project teams to work with each pilot city. In late January 1967, Secretary Weaver instructed HUD Regional Administrators to convene the field project teams and to begin discussions with the pilot cities.

Meanwhile HUD was experiencing serious difficulties in securing agreements within the Washington interagency committee regarding the detailed design and procedures of the NCPP and in obtaining fund commitments from the service agencies (HEW, Labor, OEO). Early in 1967 the funding problem was escalated to a higher-level group comprised of the ~~under~~ secretaries for the participating agencies. In March this group agreed to allocate each of the city pilot projects to one or another of the service agencies for core funding. BOB was strongly opposed to this move because it would de-emphasize the interagency character of the pilot program. The impasse over design and procedures also continued unresolved. In late March the draft guidelines were issued to the field on HUD authority, still without substantive approval by OEO.

The generally slow progress on the NCPP coupled with the agreement to parcel out the funding of the pilot projects led to BOB intervention with the White House to convene the Urban Cabinet group in early April 1967. At this meeting, it was agreed that HUD leadership for the NCPP would be linked to the secretary level, that the Washington interagency committee would be reconstituted at a higher level, that HUD would allocate more staff to the NCPP, that most of the funding of the core services and staff for all fourteen centers would be assumed by OEO and that the field teams would be rejuvenated. There were several sub-cabinet meetings on the NCPP during the period April-June.

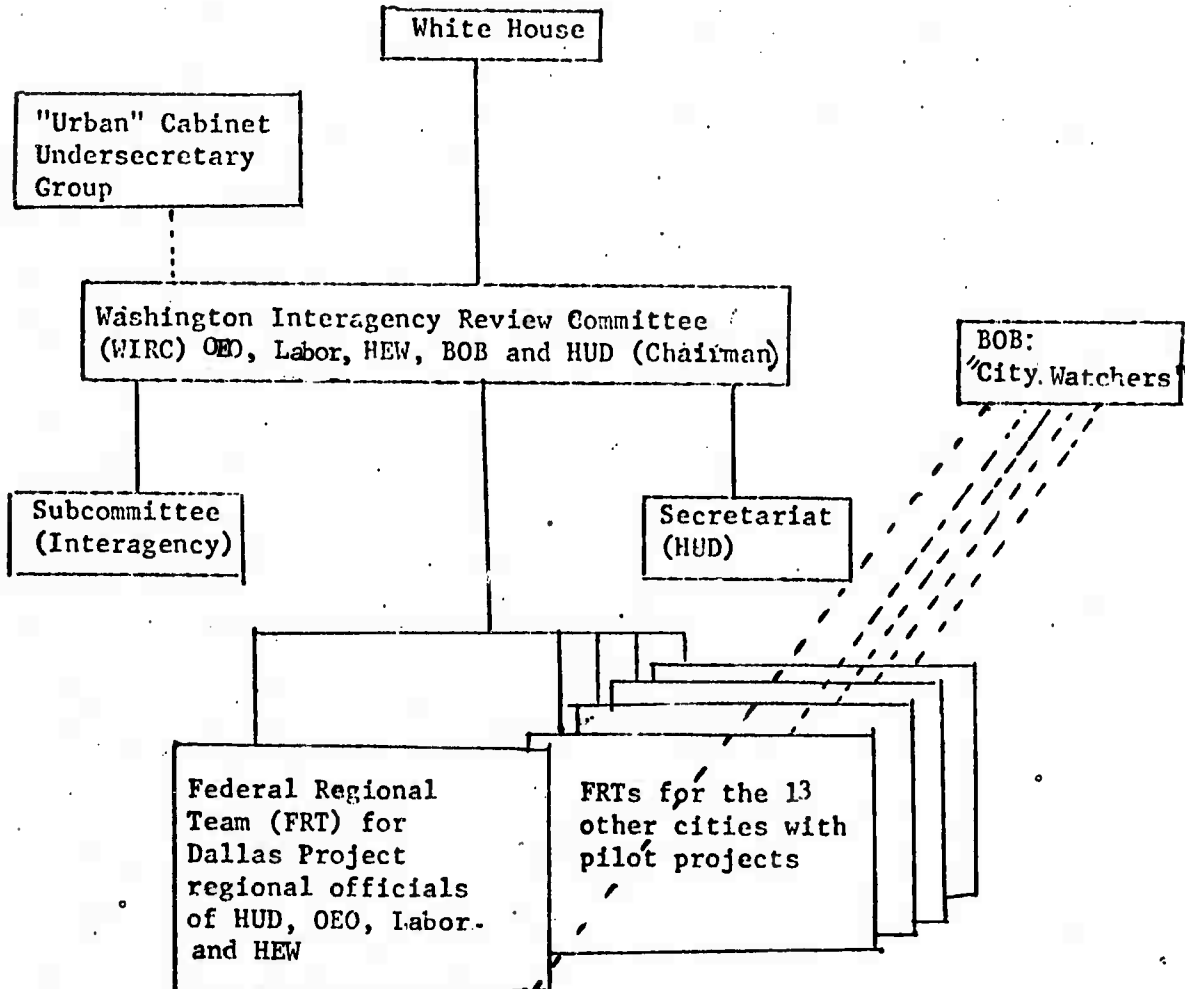
With the new measure of Cabinet level commitment obtained in April, an interagency management system began to function in both Washington and the field. (See Figure 8.1.) The reconstituted Washington Interagency Review Committee (WIRC) undertook to develop operational guidance for the field on the preparation, review and evaluation of the prospectus for the Neighborhood Service Program (NSP-1). WIRC was supported by a subcommittee with similar interagency composition, and by a secretariat responsible to the HUD chairman. A Federal Regional Team (FRT) was established for each of the fourteen cities to support the program at the project level. The Bureau of the Budget assigned Washington-based officials to monitor each project, designating them "City Watchers."

The WIRC itself was actively trying to secure program funding commitments from the agencies, but eventually the WIRC chairman took recourse to the Cabinet group in mid-June to gain the necessary interagency authority. In this meeting, as in the April meeting, Presidential Assistant Joseph Califano attended and invoked the President's personal interest in the program in order to obtain the commitments of reluctant agencies, especially OEO and HEW. One particular outcome of the earlier cabinet meeting was the decision to incorporate another demonstration program in the NCPP, namely, the OEO 207 - Neighborhood Corporation Program. Under this program, OEO would provide more liberal funding for planning and core services to a limited number of the fourteen pilot cities which were willing to agree to the terms of OEO 207 which involved the development of a neighborhood controlled organization.



Figure 8.1

An Unofficial Organizational Chart of the  
Federal Management System for the NCPP



### Defining the Program's Ground Rules

The bargaining agreements finally reached in Washington over agency contributions and support for the NCPP conflicted with earlier guidelines.

Based on the early communications they received from HUD, officials of the selected cities understood the program as follows: The project proposals were to be developed by the cities within the framework of a flexible set of standards to be specified by the Washington interagency committee. Pilot cities would be expected to plan and design projects with wide involvement of public and private agencies; to involve representatives of the neighborhood to the greatest extent possible in the selection of service programs and the planning and operation of the centers; to design a service system which included participation of established as well as new community social agencies or activities. On the federal end, funding arrangements and commitments were to be developed by agreement among the sponsoring agencies, on the basis of the prospectus for the city's service program and its center. The federal project teams in the field were to provide technical assistance to the cities and otherwise facilitate planning and funding processes.

At the outset, it had appeared that the mayors of pilot cities were given the primary responsibility for local initiative and responsibility. A subsequent letter from HUD to the mayors proposed that the local Community Action Agency (CAA) would seem to be a logical agency for further program development of the NCPP, but that the "best arrangement" for each city could be discussed with the federal project teams. In early 1967, it was discovered that most mayors were not designating CAA officials as their project coordinators, but tended to be naming urban renewal or planning officials. In draft guidelines sent to the field in late March 1967, it was indicated that the project should be developed by a local project team including representatives of city, county, state, public and private interests as well as residents of the neighborhood to be served. The guidelines stressed that each of the pilot projects should be locally conceived and that specific rules and regulations for the pilot program would be avoided. The guidelines reiterated that each city would be expected to involve, to the greatest possible extent, neighborhood representatives in the development of the center.

Following the reconstitution of the NCPP effort in April, communications from Washington became more explicit and tended to contradict the earlier suggestion of local discretion and flexibility. For example, on April 28, 1967, the WIRC chairman informed FRT chairmen that the CAA, with the endorsement of the mayor, would be the sponsor of the NSP-I unless there were compelling and documented reasons to the contrary. Thus the mayor-CAA role issue was settled, at least in Washington, on the basis of CAA primacy. The local project sponsor therefore was to be either the CAA or a delegate agency of the CAA.

Similarly, the acceptable mechanisms for citizen influence over the planning and operation of the center program were also displaced

from the CAA to some form of continuing neighborhood organization focusing sharply on the center service area. This change was reflected generally in the WIRC issuance of August 28, 1967 governing citizen involvement, although this policy had been aggressively promoted by OEO program officials since the project's inception.

The greatest impact on the prevailing ground rules, however, accompanied the introduction of the OEO 207 (Neighborhood Corporation) program into the NCPP. The 207 program option was offered to the cities as a source of generous funding for their local NCPP, although the conditions attached to this option had a recognized potential for materially changing the ground rules under which the NCPP had been initiated. Half of the cities elected to participate in the OEO program. Despite efforts on the part of some members of WIRC, especially the BOB, Labor and HUD members, to insure that the cities and especially the mayors fully realized the implications of accepting the 207 option; it is clear from field testimony that many mayors, and for that matter some CAAs, did not understand the full significance of the 207 program.

As it evolved, then, the 207 program came to influence heavily the manner in which program planning for the center occurred, the mode in which acceptable citizen participation would be structured and operated, and the effective authority which OEO (especially its Washington program branch and its consultants retained for the 207 program) could exercise over the implementation of the NCPP in the neighborhood corporation cities. Thus the 207 program brought with it a capacity for OEO to revise materially the authoritative expectations which had governed the implementation of the NCPP up to that time. For example, the leadership role for the mayor or the CAA or a joint effort by the two, shifted to the prospective neighborhood corporation. The planning of services and the establishment of participatory machinery could not always be carried out simultaneously. Thus, the major thrust was aimed at creating the citizen participation and planning structures before serious planning could begin.

A number of local and state officials, FRT members and Washington level participants were "turned off" at various points in the NCPP because of the new directions for the program connoted by the changing ground rules. For example, when the local initiative responsibility shifted from the mayors to the CAA or to the neighborhood corporation, there was a tendency for city and state agencies either to withdraw or to resist involvement. Likewise when program initiative and participation focus moved from the CAA to neighborhood organizations, the CAAs, in some cases, became less responsive and attentive to the NCPP. It fell largely to the Federal Regional Teams to stimulate sustained involvement of those tending to withdraw. In a number of cities, local efforts on the NCPP came to a halt for varying periods as a result of changes in expectations and the needs to negotiate new roles and adjustments.

### Implementation in the Field

As traced above, there was no official guidance for the effort of agency officials in the field until April 1967. Field officials were generally reluctant to assume much initiative during this period--except for HUD negotiations with cities for facilities grants. In early 1967 HUD regional officials were ordered by Washington to initiate immediate activity on the NCPP. Meetings with representatives of other federal agencies and with city officials were scheduled. FRTs were convened and, despite a generally acknowledged lack of understanding about the purposes and procedures of the NCPP, the teams attempted to orient and stimulate city officials. The eventual results were understandably disappointing to all participants. Much of the information and guidance conveyed to the cities in these meetings (e.g., funding, community involvement definition, deadlines, evaluation, etc.) was later changed or withdrawn. FRT captains suffered a loss in prestige and influence by calling these meetings without a clear agenda; this pattern made the federal officials vulnerable to the criticism that they were more interested in appearances than substance. It was widely conceded that NCPP was off to an unpromising start.

With the reconstitution of WIRC in April 1967, the unofficial guidelines were replaced by a series of some 28 formal issuances and assorted papers and memoranda which appeared periodically throughout the remainder of 1967. Still, Washington guidance tended to be issued only on those matters of substance and procedure for which at any point in time they could elicit unanimous agreement within WIRC. Other issues were either untreated, treated ambiguously, or implicitly relegated to the field for resolution.

After they were launched in April 1967, the Federal Regional Teams tended to find themselves at the center of a complex process of mobilizing an array of local participants, monitoring and assisting the local planning efforts, and trying to develop an effective mode of federal inter-agency facilitation within increasingly explicit directives from Washington. The variety of tasks, roles and problems assumed by those teams became a fair reflection of the wide ranging differences among the pilot cities with respect to their incentives and capacities to participate in a program of this sort.

It took Washington officials nearly eight months (August 1966-April 1967) to begin to work out definite arrangements for the NCPP while the field (FRTs, cities, communities) were expected to implement the design, within a vastly more complicated environment, in six months (April-October 1967). It is clear that the weight of time fell much more heavily on the field than on Washington. It proved impossible to develop proposals meeting the original program expectations in terms of process, quality, and comprehensiveness criteria within the timetable developed.

By June 15, the NSP-Is of the cities were approved by WIRC and the service program planning phase (NSP-II) began. Although WIRC originally anticipated that this second phase could be completed by August 31, it ultimately proved necessary to relax the deadlines first to September 30, then to October 31, and finally to the end of the year. At that, not all pilot cities succeeded in submitting NSP-IIIs before 1968.

It was finally possible to announce in mid-March 1968 (when we concluded the field investigation on which this study was based) that funding had been approved by the four agencies (HUD, HEW, OEO and Labor) for service programs in thirteen of the fourteen pilot cities. At the same time it was recognized by WIRC that in most pilot projects only a beginning had been made toward the objectives of a neighborhood service system. Efforts were continuing in each community to elaborate the scope and integration of the service systems initiated.

#### Emergent Structure of Goals for the Pilot Program

By way of summary, several primary goals had emerged for the pilot program: first, the NCPP called for an integrated service delivery system with three features--core services (e.g., neighborhood center manager, and staff for central intake and diagnosis), multiple service programs (e.g., health, manpower, education, day care) and linkages among programs and between core services and component programs. Second, the program sought citizen participation in planning and operating the neighborhood service program. Third, the program contemplated the building of a physical facility to house the neighborhood centers. An additional purpose of the pilot program was to gain valuable experience in interagency program management.

#### Contextual Forces and Elements of the Design of the Management System

This section analyzes those features of the management system and many relevant forces in this setting which were influential regarding both the character of interagency roles and processes which evolved in the system and also the quality of the results obtained.

Four aspects of the authority structure are treated--the choice of HUD as lead agency, the authority invested in the lead role, the level of the bureaucracy providing active policy leadership and the authority invested in agency representation to the NCPP management. Thus, we review the funding provisions, the personnel assigned to the interagency mechanisms, and the various roles of the Budget Bureau.

#### The Choice of Lead Agency

That HUD was the most appropriate agency for the lead role in NCPP was a premise implicit in the fact that it was designated by the White House. However, to our knowledge, the leadership choice was not discussed

with the agencies in advance and no general rationale for the choice was offered by the White House. The choice was manifested in three types of acts: The Convenor Order issued in August 1966; the President's Syracuse speech, also made in August 1966, in which he announced that he was asking Secretary Weaver to take on leadership for an assignment which became the NCPP; the series of communications among the White House, HUD, and Bureau of the Budget during the first few weeks after the Syracuse speech. Apparently, these latter communications, aimed at determining the character of the response to the Presidential mandate, induced considerable confusion, creating uncertainty in the minds of even HUD officials about whether they did in fact have the lead responsibility. Apart from the wisdom of the particular choice of HUD, this procedure and context for giving HUD the mantle was not helpful to HUD in establishing its role in launching the program. For example, it didn't provide top HUD officials with the necessary certainty to make timely good will gestures to the other participating agencies (and to OEO in particular) should there have been any desire on HUD's part to pursue such a strategy for eliciting early inter-agency support for the project.

A measure of uncertainty continued indefinitely and was disconcerting to HUD officials. In early 1967, when the NCPP was badly staggering under HUD leadership, there were proposals in BOB to replace HUD with either OEO or HEW. Surprisingly, in his Message on Poverty in March 1967, the President reasserted the leadership of OEO in the expansion of neighborhood center programs.

Reactions to Choice of HUD for Lead Role. So far as other participating agencies are concerned, HUD was not a clear and obvious choice for the lead role in the NCPP. The HUD lead appeared to be a logical elaboration of the HUD statutory role for leadership in urban affairs, but this assignment also conflicted with the OEO formal authority to coordinate federal anti-poverty programs. Moreover, the Presidential designation of HUD for NCPP leadership appeared insensitive to the neighborhood-based service programs operated by OEO, HEW, and Labor.

Initial lack of acceptance was evidenced both in Washington and in the field. As one official in OEO/Washington said, "We had our nose out of joint for some time over the selection of HUD for the lead role." In one city OEO staff felt that OEO should have received the lead because they believed it had the only meaningful experience in implementing multi-service center programs. In a second city, both HEW and Labor representatives said they believed their agencies had been more appropriate for the lead role. The FRT chairman in this city experienced considerable difficulty in finding a pattern of leading which induced a minimum of resistance from other members. In fact, the HUD "leadership pattern" was one of sitting back, letting Labor and HEW initiate, and then reacting to them, usually by agreeing with them.

Criteria for Lead Role. Given that there was no clear choice for the lead role, it seemed natural that the chosen leader would encounter a period of resentment. In the longer run, the appropriateness of the choice depended on how the agency rated on many criteria. Our investigation suggests consideration of the following general factors. The fact that conflict management would figure importantly in the lead role helps explain why many of the attributes considered important for third-party interventions (in Chapter 2) also appear here.

1. Knowledge: Several types of knowledge are relevant to the lead role. Ideally for this program, the lead agency should have had an understanding of social service since a goal was to rationalize and inter-relate social services. In this respect, the other participating agencies were clearly more qualified than HUD. The lead agency should also have experience with centers and an understanding of community dynamics because of the key role of this type of community institution in the program. OEO especially had an accumulation of relevant experience with neighborhood centers. Also, the lead agency should possess significant conceptual sophistication bearing on the particular program being innovated. The Bureau of the Budget had provided leadership in conceiving the initial model of the pilot program. Apparently the HUD officials who had the initiative to act frequently did not immediately grasp the conceptual issues of the program and had difficulty in resolving conceptual differences among the participating agencies.

2. Balance in orientation: The a priori positioning of the agency on many potential conflict issues is relevant to the lead role. A chairman of a group of peers is most effective if he does not have a strong position on the issues which must be resolved. Precisely because HUD had not been a social service agency HUD officials could be seen as "not having any axes to grind." Also, generally (but not without exception) HUD personnel tended to have either a more open or at least an intermediate view on the important issue of citizen involvement. For example, this basic fact made it possible for the WIRC chairman to report: "I perceived my role as getting guys together on a common point of view. Often I wouldn't take a position. Usually, I proposed a compromise." In contrast, OEO, which would have had the greater amount of relevant knowledge, was judged by the participants from other agencies to have positions too extreme on too many issues to have served in the lead role.

3. Power: Certain power factors are important to the lead role. Flexible funds can substantially enhance leadership efforts. HUD did not have authority to commit planning funds, a fact which contributed to the feelings of impotency of some HUD officials. OEO, with its flexible funds, met this criteria better than HUD. A more general power factor was general legislative support. HUD appeared to be less vulnerable than OEO to Congressional disapproval, appropriation reduction, and restraining legislation. A less important but relevant factor was an agency's stature in the Cabinet. Some participants believe that in part because he was a junior member in the Cabinet, the secretary of HUD was less assertive in forums of the Great Society agencies.

4. Process expertise: A general factor was the skill which an agency's personnel could typically bring to bear on interagency and intergovernmental relations in dealing with neighborhood residents. As it happens, HEW and Labor had more experience in dealing with states, HUD in dealing with city governments, and OEO in dealing with ghetto residents. All of these experiences and the skills derived from them were important to NCPP. It is difficult to say which liaison skills were most important. Turning to interagency dealings, all four agencies have had relevant experience, although HUD urban renewal personnel, who carried the early NCPI responsibilities, were not considered highly experienced in this area by their colleagues in other agencies. However, OEO personnel reportedly had less patience in dealing with their sister agencies, a factor which might have operated against their effective performance of the lead role among peer agencies. During the period through March 1967, HUD, too, was criticized by officials of other agencies for relying too heavily on the formal lead assignment with the consequence of "turning off other agencies." This was less true of the WIRC chairman who was credited with exercising influence more subtly. More will be said later about the various leadership patterns employed by HUD officials.

5. Internal effectiveness and congruence: Several internal characteristics increase the ability of an agency to perform the lead role. HUD benefited from a well developed field organization which was both capable of initiative and subject to discipline. The regional organizations of Labor and HEW were relatively weaker than the HUD organization, while the field organization of OEO was less predictable than HUD. A related factor is that HUD experienced less of the energy-draining internal conflict between new and traditional program lines that predictably affected Labor and HEW. Although it's not clear that it was predictable in August 1966, HUD's program and intergovernmental components did conflict with each other in a way that undermined the pilot program during the first six months of operation.

6. Motivation: The lead agency should have a high stake in doing a good job. The fact that HUD knew that Model Cities was coming along provided them with an extra incentive to learn from this experience, although one does get the impression that the motivation to make the NCPP a smashing success was neither great nor well internalized in more than a few individuals within HUD. Whether this rationale for HUD's lead proves to be weighty will have to be determined by the eventual utilization of NCPP experience. One comment was that "after HUD got off the emphasis on the physical facility, it became clear that HUD wouldn't get special credit." The advantage of this perception of shared credit is that other agencies were less likely to resent contributing to the program; the disadvantage was that HUD's motivation to drive forward on the program also tapered off.

7. Strengths to exploit versus deficiencies to remedy: The selection of a lead agency for an interagency program should consider the impact which a leadership role would impose on the agency. A leadership role can be designated not only to exploit the present strength of an agency but also to induce desirable changes in an agency or to overcome its present weaknesses.



For example, one rationalization for HUD's leadership role in the NCPP was its value in preparing the organization for the Model Cities responsibilities. Similarly, a participative role in the NCPP was credited with influencing desired changes in organization, procedures, attitudes and staffing within HEW and Labor. Thus a leadership role for either of these agencies might have been exploited to induce even a greater measure of organizational change in the direction of enhanced responsiveness to urban social problems.

On balance, the findings indicated to this observer that among the fully participating agencies, HUD and OEO were more appropriate for the lead role of the NCPP. Given that the NCPP was to operate within a framework of low effective authority or power associated with the lead agency, HUD's relative neutrality and blandness made it the most appropriate agency. HUD was especially appropriate during the period when city government approval, initiative and participation were important. On the other hand, if the lead agency were to have relatively more power to make the ultimate decisions and the participation of other agencies was expected to result less from collaborative multi-agency processes and more from invitation, response and bilateral negotiation, OEO's reported capacity for irritating the bureaucracies with which it deals might represent a less severe handicap. Such a handicap could be offset by OEO's greater experience and flexible funds. Also, OEO's greater experience with ghetto residents would make its lead more appropriate in the stages when substantial initiative and responsibility rests at this level.

Two policy factors also condition the selection of leadership for an interagency program--the clarity and compatibility of goals, and the measure of Presidential commitment. HUD leadership in the NCPP and, presumably, the leadership of any line agency was hampered by the absence of an authoritative statement of program goals, the difficulty of reconciling multiple goals, and the recurring skepticism about Presidential interest.

These factors gave rise to still another leadership option, the Bureau of the Budget. Some would characterize the operative leadership of the program as "HUD supported by BOB." During the several critical stages of the NCPP, the BOB assumes responsibilities for conflict resolution and action forcing which eclipsed the formal HUD leadership. An operational role as the lead agency would connote a departure from the traditional stance of the Bureau. However, the sentiment prevailed among some BOB groups that tradition should be swapped for active leadership in inter-agency programs marked by high Presidential commitment, low formal authority, quick impact, and deep ideological conflicts among participating agencies.

Another variant of sustained executive direction for the NCPP was the suggestion that one agency serve as a White House project manager instead of heavy reliance on interagency collaboration as the authority base for action. One factor to be considered here is whether the White House can afford to absorb the risk of failure of experimental programs.

Authority Invested in Lead Agency

A premise of the management system was that the HUD Convenor Order would be adequate authority for the leadership functions required. By the Convenor Order (Executive Order 11297, dated August 30, 1966), the President directed that "the Secretary of HUD shall convene, or authorize his representatives to convene, meetings at appropriate times and places of the heads (or representatives designated by them) of such federal departments and agencies with programs affecting urban areas as he deems necessary or desirable for the following purposes: to promote interagency cooperation; to provide a forum for coordination of mutual problems; to consult with and obtain the advice of federal agencies; to identify urban development problems which require interagency or intergovernmental coordination."

At the WIRC level in Washington, the HUD Convenor Order did serve its limited purpose effectively. Of all NCPP participants interviewed or referred to in our interviews, the HUD person who served as first chairman of WIRC after it was created in April 1967, understood best both the limitations and possibilities of the Convenor Order and how to maximize its possibilities. He relied heavily on his control over process. His interventions were aimed at building strong interpersonal relations among team members. For example, most relevant to the Convenor Order, the chairman would cancel any meeting when any member could not attend. The meeting would be rescheduled when all could attend. A high order of attendance and participation was realized in the WIRC. The chairman tried to avoid imposing the views of the lead agency; he endeavored to have the program perceived as an interagency rather than a HUD program; he worked diligently to build interpersonal relations among team members by trying to stabilize representation and using informal encounters to build rapport; he tried to enforce the norm that they would speak with one voice in their contacts with FRT members; he manifested unusual patience and attended to group processes, apparently with considerable skill. With one possible exception, the members of this WIRC, the composition of which remained stable from spring to the end of the year in 1967, maintained their commitment to the NCPP and to each other.

At the WIRC subcommittee and staff level, however, problems of inadequate response were experienced. For example, those HUD officials on the secretariat for WIRC who had responsibility for maintaining contact with FRT captains (each served as desk officer for a fraction of the pilot cities) wanted to develop as complete a picture as possible of conditions and developments in each city. They were not successful in arranging for the meetings with staff members of all the other agencies.

Apparently the Convenor Order was not formally utilized above the WIRC level in Washington. There is no evidence of the exercise of the Convenor Order at the level of Departmental Secretary. The meetings of the Urban Cabinet group were apparently convened by the White House.

We tried to trace the implications of low formal authority contained in the Convenor Order. This factor meant that the effective leadership of HUD chairmen would have to rely greatly upon (a) their utilization of other sources of leverage or power to induce the other agencies to cooperate and/or (b) their personal skills in building collaborative relationships and team commitments. Unfortunately neither of these secondary sources of leadership influence was uniformly present in adequate measure.

Moreover, there were certain dilemmas associated with the above conditions. Low power sometimes discouraged a HUD official from even attempting to convene his counterparts from other agencies or resulted in his failure to get participation when he tried. Thus, he couldn't create the forum in which to promote collaborative processes. As another dilemma, the FRT chairman's inability to directly influence an FRT member meant that in order to get the man's attendance, he sometimes had to employ indirect means (up-over-and-down the other agency's hierarchy) that alienated the target FRT member and ensured that the resulting cooperation from the man was mechanical rather than enthusiastic. These two dilemmas indicate how low power conditions can both create the great need for emergent collaboration and create conditions preventing collaborative opportunities or nullifying cooperative overtures.

Low leadership authority and power had further effects, virtually imposing the requirement of decision making by consensus in the WIRC. In turn the requirement of consensus (a) made the WIRC process very time-consuming for the participants; (b) resulted in delays in issuances in guidelines, which created city and community antagonisms toward the federal establishment and worked against high quality achievements at the local levels; (c) resulted in combining two demonstration projects, the compatibility of which is questionable given the time constraints; (d) so preoccupied WIRC members with the committee's internal relations that they were relatively less sensitive to its relations with the field teams.

One is forced to conclude that the Convenor Order represented a necessary authorization but also a very small fraction of the pool of resources upon which HUD could draw in lead responsibilities. It seems clear that the lead agency needed more formal authority or more supporting resources such as provision for planning and consulting funds. In any event, more systematic attention needs to be given to the collaborative skills which were necessary for assuming the lead role among sister agencies in a project of program design and implementation.

#### Agency Authority Vested in Interagency Representation

Related premises which underlay the design of the NCPP management system were: that each regional team member and member of WIRC would have authority to speak for his agency with regard to the NCPP; that the project manager approach was one means for realizing this expectation. While the HUD chairmen of WIRC and FRTs were considered to be somewhat akin to project managers for the NCPP in carrying out the HUD program leadership responsibility, the other members of WIRC and FRTs were also regarded as

project managers for the NCPP within their own organizations. Essentially the task of project manager was to "deliver" the resources of his agency (both in Washington and in the field) to the support of the NCPP. These resources took the form of technical assistance, funding information, functional linkages with existing agency supported programs, priority review, and flexibility in the application of standards.

The project manager pattern varied from agency to agency and among regions. Where, for various reasons discussed below, the agency representation could not speak for his agency, the management system faltered.

The Labor Department failed to provide an effective departmental spokesman in many FRTs during the early period because it did not have appropriate regional offices which could establish firm working relationships with the other agencies. Labor representatives that were supplied were program-oriented, whereas HUD, HEW and OEO representatives tended to be generalists. Also, many Labor/FRT members were deeply committed to the initiation of an employment program in which they had heavy lead responsibility and therefore resisted the demands of extensive involvement in the NCPP. Most preferred to limit their role to that of technical specialist in linking existing Labor-supported manpower programs to the prospective NCPP and in that role they generally met the expectations of their FRT colleagues. Typically, criticism of Labor field agents' participation centered on their irregularity of participation and their reluctance to assume a generalist responsibility for NCPP--and in their technical competence in cutting the NSPP into Labor programs. During this period Labor was also in the process of an organizational reform in the field which, as realized, permitted stronger generalist representation on the FRTs.

HEW/FRT project managers had to rely heavily on program people for voluntary cooperation. While most HEW/FRT project managers held formal program coordination responsibilities within the regional office, these coordinating positions were relatively new and endowed with little formal authority vis-à-vis the regional program agencies. They thus experienced some difficulty in inducing the program people to give any priority to NCPP and had no capacity to compel it. Typically, regional commissioners themselves were not placing any pressure on their subordinates to work on it, and participation had to be negotiated individually. In at least one region, the HEW project manager had to rely on the FRT chairman → WIRC → Department → Bureau → Field Route to secure desired regional action by program agencies.

HEW project managers in both Washington and the field were severely handicapped by the Department's inability to develop in timely fashion a system for earmarking funds. Two major efforts were undertaken by HEW to establish an earmarking system. Both efforts, however, were hobbled by unpredictabilities on the part of applicants and resistance of program bureaus to making funding commitments by unconventional procedures, e.g., in the absence of the usual documentation. Ultimately, the Office of the Secretary established an earmarking system which presumably would support the project management function both in Washington and the field.

Thus the project management responsibilities in HEW and Labor were almost uniformly unmatched by formal capacity to accomplish the function. The manager's capacity to secure the necessary resources was based almost entirely on personal persuasion buttressed by whatever support for the NCPP came down from authoritative hierarchical channels. The supportive authority for the NCPP came late in both HEW and Labor in the form of departmental directives. While the HEW and recent Labor designees to FRTs occupied formal coordinating roles within their regional office organizations, the structural weakness of the regional hierarchy in these agencies continued to militate against effective coordinating authority at the command of FRT members.

The NCPP experience is consistent with the hypothesis that where the authority base for project management is limited or minimal, greater emphasis must be placed on active involvement and participation in the program by all parties controlling needed resources. While this involvement complicates the management structure, it is the only means of mobilizing sufficient influence to achieve the desired objective. In several HEW regional offices, resource committees of program agency representatives were created to produce this type of participation and to support the HEW project manager. In one region, the FRT project manager regretted not establishing such a committee for the NCPP in the light of his earlier problems in representing the department and of his subsequent success in utilizing such a committee for Model Cities.

#### Level and Role of Policy Leadership

That an interagency pilot program could be initiated and executed by working-level departmental subunits and personnel supported by ad hoc rather than more regularly convened sub-Cabinet meetings was a premise implicit in the original design and conduct of the management system. The premise was not borne out in experience.

The nominal authority of the lead role and the philosophical issues raised by the program made it appropriate for the NCPP to be the subject of early and explicit negotiations among Cabinet or sub-Cabinet level officials of the participating agencies. Preliminary negotiations should have dealt with goals, scope, contributions and methods. This didn't occur and the program was initiated at lower levels of the participating agencies, with the result that over the first six months conflicts were debated endlessly; very little commitment to the program developed; HUD officials were not able to effectively form interagency groups; and no financial commitments were forthcoming other than money for facilities. Even with these extended difficulties, the impasses were not escalated to high levels, in part because members of the group debating the NCPP feared they would get an undesirable solution. When the NCPP finally was taken to the White House, the focus was on funding and organizational matters; not on the central philosophical differences among the agencies.

### Funding Provisions

The pilot program was launched without new funding legislation. The premise was that it would be possible for the participating agencies to establish or identify timely and adequate funding resources for the NCPP. The funding aspect of the program was generally judged the most troublesome feature of the program. The record shows that it was not possible to identify adequate funding resources for the NCPP in a timely manner. Except for HUD fund reservations for facilities at the outset of the NCPP, no funding commitments were made by other agencies until the OEO offers of 207 funds and the Labor offer of funds for job-oriented centers in Concentrated Employment Program cities in March 1967. It was only after the Urban Cabinet meeting of June 16, 1967 and upon the direction of the White House that other firm funding assurances were made by OEO, HEW and Labor. The initial and continued uncertainty surrounding funding had predominantly adverse effects on the rate of progress and the quality of the NSP products, and yet also had some redeeming influences.

Reasons for Uncertainty. The failure to secure early funding support was attributable to several factors. First, it was impossible to secure agreement on the definitive characteristics and operating procedures of the NCPP for over seven months because of deep differences among agency representatives. Agency program officials resisted fund commitments to a program lacking agreement on basic features and procedures or, as in the case of OEO, where the apparent features and procedures (operation through mayor) contradicted a strong agency principle.

Second, there was skepticism about the measure of Presidential interest in the NCPP. Also, there was strong resistance, particularly in OEO, to the principle that agency funds can be forced into an interagency pot -- even on Presidential direction--with the agency effectively losing control, responsibility and credit for its funds.

Third, except for a speculative model budget for the NCPP developed by the interagency committee, there was no solid estimate of fund requirements against which to exact commitments. Program agencies would not "lock up" funds on such vague premises.

Fourth, in HEW there was no procedure for earmarking of funds for NCPP, had the program agencies been willing to do so.

Fifth, state and local governments were not generally willing to commit funds for many of the above reasons and in the absence of a clear definition of state and city roles in the development of the NCPP.

The funding problem thus became a circular puzzle. Agencies would not voluntarily commit funds until there was agreement on basic design features and a sound need-based estimate of requirements. The local sponsors were expected to develop the need-based estimate of requirements and priorities but were reluctant to engage in such an exercise without some assurance of funding, the more specific the better. Amid such

uncertainty, the federal government invited the participation of the communities. As one observer put it, "When the interagency committee could not solve the problems of program design and funding needs, it decided to let the communities try to solve them by giving them planning money."

Consequences of Uncertainty. The absence of funding guidance was rationalized on two grounds: First that it forced a rational assessment of need without the distorting effect of fund targets, and second, that it forced the neighborhood to organize itself to undertake the task of needs analysis. At the same time that objective identification of needs was stressed, the necessity for priorities in a context of limited resources was also stressed. The appealing rationale for identifying needs first and determining appropriate program responses second had to be measured against several risks and realistic constraints set forth below.

The absence of funding guidance was the basis of the lack of credibility of the Washington promises that deserving, i.e., needed or innovative, programs planned by the communities, would be funded. The communities were reluctant to enter into the exercise under such uncertainties, thereby making the task of the FRT doubly difficult. Even once committed formally, the communities were reluctant to enlarge their circle of involvement for fear of unduly raising expectations; and therefore they were unable to involve others who might have contributed, because of the funding uncertainties.

In several respects, the uncertainty of funding prospects was probably the single greatest handicap to the FRT in carrying out its responsibilities. This uncertainty accounted for much of the early slowness of response on the part of cities and communities and for the modest quality of the NSPs. To counteract the credibility gap, the FRTs frequently exaggerated the prospects of funding, which in turn led to expectations which could not be met. The FRTs were caught between their own realization that the sky was not really the limit, and the instructions from Washington which, while guarded conveyed the impression that money would be found. Fortunately, the cities and communities also realized that all needs could not be met, but the limits of their demands were often conditioned more by judgments of their own political significance to the NCPP and to the Presidential commitment than by the aims of the pilot program.

In at least one respect, this funding situation made a positive contribution to the reconception of the federal role. Placed in the position of stimulating proposals over which they had little authoritative guidance either in money or programmatic terms, some FRT members nevertheless remained viable and acceptable to their clients. Deprived of authoritative supports in the form of fund limits and center program design characteristics, these FRT members tended to associate their role and function with that of the applicants. In urging the applicant to plan big and not possessing any effective means of limiting this planning,

some FRT members tended to be more attracted to the local planning effort than to the exercise of any limiting function on that effort. Thus, while many felt squeezed and uncomfortable in their dual role, caught between the anticipated yet unpredictable shortcomings of federal response and the local expectations they helped to create, others developed a commitment to this new downward orientation for federal field officials.

It might be concluded then, that the absence of funding and conceptual guidelines, while contrary to the traditional situation, in some cases actually enhanced the FRTs' commitment to the community and its problems. Had the FRTs been armed with an array of planning parameters, it is doubtful that some of their members would have pursued such a deep involvement in community problem-solving activity.

#### Personnel Assignments for Interagency Mechanisms

The concept of NCPP management system contains the implicit assumption that participating agencies would adopt patterns of personnel assignments that would build reliable interagency mechanisms. In practice the patterns of personnel assignment frequently detracted from, rather than enhanced, the development of effective teams. The variability in the personnel factor was extremely important in accounting for both the successes and the failures of FRTs. The variety of personal attributes that affected performance in this setting are illustrated by what some of the participants found relevant to say about one FRT chairman who spent full time on two city projects:

He was credited by local officials and one team member with having done an exceptional job, being almost singly responsible for any successes to date. The team member said the chairman has not overstepped his authority, has been open, has not tried to pull any deals without notifying the team, understands bureaucracies, grasps the variety of programs, and can deal effectively with community people. Local officials said he always knew what he could do; and noted that they were never encouraged to go around him. They too said he was good at handling touchy issues in the community.

On the basis of our investigation, we reached the following conclusions: First, in view of the fact that the program was innovative in concept, involved multi-agency goals, and must be implemented by an ad hoc collaborative interagency mechanism rather than command and control structure, too little attempt was made to develop a procedure for selecting representatives (a) who already had or were likely to quickly develop philosophic commitment to the goals of the program; and (b) who had relatively high interpersonal and liaison skills.

Second, because it was important for representatives of agencies to develop high commitment to the multi-agency goals of the program, it would have been highly desirable: (a) to make this particular liaison responsibility the most important part of his job and require 50% or slightly more



of his time; (b) to insist that the same person or persons always attend interagency meetings; (c) to ensure that liaison assignments be for a sustained period of time; (d) to plan for other conditions that strengthen the interpersonal relations, such as scheduling joint trips to Washington (or to the field) and informal gatherings of team members.

Where the above conditions were met to a greater degree, the inter-agency teams tended to be more effective. We believe that had WIRC given more attention to this personnel aspect of the management system, even at the expense of time devoted to developing guidance for the field or detailed reviewing of proposals from the field, they could have had more strategic impact on the quality of the management system and its outputs.

The quality of personnel in a management system is influenced not only by the design of liaison roles, and by the selection of persons for those roles, but also by the orientation to and training of persons for their roles. We found that the concepts involved in and skills required by NCPP warranted considerably more formal training effort than was actually provided. Most FRT members readily conceded a lack of preparation for the NCPP assignment. They admitted a poor grasp of the NCPP purposes and how to achieve them; of problems and methods of intergovernmental and interagency and intra-agency leadership, collaboration and conflict resolution; of providing technical assistance to communities; of achieving program linkages; of utilizing consulting resources, and so on. Two FRT conferences in May and July, 1967, which had training as one purpose, were to focus on elaboration of formal program guidelines and rules to meet the above training needs. Moreover, the structured format of the conferences and the large size of the meetings meant that there was little provision for working involvement of FRT participants. The conferences provided little opportunity for federal regional officials to define and work on their particular training needs and overlooked the possibility of "peer training," that is, the idea that FRTs could be valuable learning resources for each other.

#### System Monitoring, Evaluation and Other BOB Roles

The Budget Bureau's role in this interagency management system was unlike any other agency in the NCPP and also a departure from its customary role. This role deserves some assessment here. The premises of BOB's involvement were that an evaluation role was the most appropriate basis for its involvement in NCPP and that BOB's provision for "city watchers" would create an adequate system for continuous monitoring and evaluating the NCPP experience.

We conclude that an evaluative role was an appropriate one for BOB in the NCPP; but that given the other needs of the management system which were not and, perhaps, could not otherwise be met by other participating agencies, the system simply could not afford the luxury of having BOB play a purely evaluative role. WHY? Given the fact that none of the other agencies really felt ownership in the interagency NCPP concept,

BOB had both to play the role of protector of that concept and to reassert Presidential priority if the program were to continue with the necessary steam. Given the paucity of authority in the Convenor Order, the system needed BOB's clout to get agency participation and funding commitments. Given the inadequacy of the field-Washington mechanism and the personnel assignments, BOB's more active participation in the FRTs was required to supplement the communication network and complement the skills in FRTs. BOB helped some in each of these respects, but not as much as it could have or should have in order to move the probability of success of the NCPP into the range of risk reasonable for the federal government to assume in a project of such potential significance.

BOB's participation via city watchers and at other levels suffered from most of the same problems characteristic of the other agencies' participation. Compared with other agencies which are the focus of attention elsewhere in this report, we find that BOB's participation was similarly uneven and prone to declines, interrupted by spasms of concern; BOB's representatives, too, sometimes had particular axes to grind, particular concepts to advocate, etc.; BOB's representatives, also, were frequently less than enthusiastic about HUD's lead role and some would have preferred to have the operational lead assumed by BOB; BOB, too, was internally ambivalent and unclear about the goals of NCPP; BOB, like the other agencies, could not and/or did not spring loose the necessary manpower to ensure that it performed its role; BOB personnel assignments reflected no more systematic attention to the match between individual personal and professional skills and the particular requirements of the roles to be performed.

As one Bureau official put it, "BOB has played a spotty, in-and-out role." Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that BOB did invest an atypically high amount of staff time on this particular human resource program and that the Bureau made atypically varied and significant contributions to the substance and operations of such a program.

Neither individually nor in combination did the BOB city watchers perform anything like a systematic monitoring and evaluation function; a fact which limited the ability of the BOB representative to WIRC to continuously make inputs in the WIRC process.

However, this form of BOB involvement and presence, as varied and sporadic as it was, performed at least one valuable warning and problem identification function. The products of this evaluation system helped trigger the White House-convened Cabinet group meeting in April 1967 which forced a reconstitution of the HUD leadership effort and a general commitment from the other agencies to the program. Even more fundamentally BOB's third-party intervention preserved the interagency character of the program when momentum was building to parcel out the centers to the individual agencies. The action component of this example illustrates monitoring and trouble-shooting rather than evaluation

functions. However, BOB did not continuously or thoroughly assess the adequacy of elements of the management system, such as the Convenor Order, the field-Washington mechanism, personnel assignments, incentives and mechanisms for involving cities, states and neighborhood residents, compatibility of various stated goals, etc. It could have performed a valuable function by doing so.

### Conflict in the Interagency Processes

It was necessary for the success of this integrative effort that agencies collaborate and work toward common goals through their representatives in Washington and in the field. Inasmuch as the quality of the emergent interagency processes are a function of the formal elements of the management system discussed above, we have already offered observations on the subject of interagency conflict and collaboration. Among the major issues of NCPP subject to competitive agency demands were the assertion of priorities among multiple goals and the functions of interagency teams. This section will focus on those sub-issues which are not dealt with extensively above.

### Priorities

The determination of priorities among multiple goals or among competing models for the NCPP was never worked out. The issue was posed by the competition of two models for primacy--was model was a quick impact, integrated service center negotiated primarily by existing service agencies and attracted by add-on bait money as an incentive to deploy and link services at the neighborhood level subject to a locally defined mode of resident influence (the instant supermarket center); the second model was a neighborhood service system designed largely by a resident organization with the technical and financial assistance of public and private agencies at a pace and on a scale heavily influenced by the capacity and desires of the resident organization (the building block center). In general, the first model was espoused by BOB and HUD officials while the latter model was favored by OEO. HEW wavered between the two, and Labor learned toward the first.

The lack of agreement on goals resulted in both models in various forms, being tested, although the program doctrine did not recognize such a dichotomy. Some participants were satisfied with the value of conducting both tests, but regretted that the duality was not formally acknowledged and provided for operationally. Others were disappointed that one or the other model did not clearly prevail.

In the field, the ambiguity afflicted the operation of the FRTs. The early operational guidance tended to reflect the premise of the instant supermarket model which then could not be effectively applied to the second model, particularly as the latter was manifest in the neighborhood corporation. FRTs found that they could not operate in the same way with pilot cities utilizing different models, yet the formal role expectations were apparently the same.

The existence of the two models is attributable to the influence which OEO gained over the NCPP as a concomitant of its heavy and necessary financial contribution to the program, and as a result of its strong ideological commitment which was not matched in strength or unity by the other participating agencies. As it happened, the acceptance of both OEO money and influence came at a time when the NCPP was faltering badly and when a major organizational change for the program was occurring. When the new WIRC machinery was activated, the OEO role and model had become a fait accompli--to the chagrin of other agency representatives and to the surprise of some OEO officials.

#### Funding

The funding principle for the NCPP was established in two Urban Cabinet meetings which produced general agreement that agency funding actions would be heavily conditioned by interagency determinations (WIRC and FRTs) and further, that agencies would identify funding resources and make advanced funding reservations for the NCPP. This principle was established only after earlier frustrations on the part of HUD to secure funding commitments to the NCPP and after a tentative agreement had been made to "parcel out" the pilot cities to one or another of the participating agencies for primary funding. The latter agreement was negotiated at the under secretary level and was "undone" only upon intervention of BOB with the White House to convene the Urban Cabinet. At this meeting it was directed that the funding for each center would be shared by each federal agency participating and that planning and core service funding would be assumed primarily by OEO. Despite subsequent protests from OEO to the White House, the principle was established that the Executive Office could direct that agency funds would be allocated to non-programmed interagency undertakings. Thus, this issue was effectively resolved at the highest level and in conformity with Presidential requirements over agency demands. It was subsequently reinforced at a second Urban Cabinet meeting several months later, convened by the White House, to insure agency funding for NSP component programs.

#### HUD Leadership Actions

The nature of the leadership role of HUD--both in Washington and in the field--was a continuing issue in the interagency management system. The issue was stimulated by HUD officials through several of their actions which were considered by other agencies to be unilateral and independent of interagency influence. On its part HUD spokesmen concede that "in some instances FRT chairmen did move out on actions without unanimity on some things, at some times, in order to meet WIRC deadlines." On the other hand, a former WIRC chairman reported that he scrupulously adhered to the principle of full FRT agreement on team and leadership actions. It should be noted that some of these resented HUD actions occurred before interagency mechanisms had been firmly established. However, the subsequent HUD commitment to interagency consensus was somewhat compromised by these earlier aberrations.

For example, independent HUD discussions with mayors and city officials about the NCPP began, and continued, in some communities both before and after the establishment of FRTs. In most cases, these discussions were focused on the HUD 703 facility program which was to be a cornerstone for the NCPP. This action was resented, however, both because it gave an undesirable initial emphasis on bricks and mortar for the NCPP and because it appeared that the major HUD program in the NCPP was to be immune from interagency influence.

A second HUD action resented by other agencies was the sending of program guidance to the field which had not been approved by participating agencies.

A third HUD action which produced resentment was the changing of pilot neighborhood boundaries to conform to Secretary Weaver's directive that whenever possible these target areas should conform to or fall within prospective Model Cities areas. These changes occurred in some cities without consultation with the FRT and after FRT agreement had been secured on the original area. For example, in St. Louis, the boundary changes were presented to the FRT as a fait accompli on the part of the city. The suspicion continued, however, that HUD had initiated the change without discussion with the FRT.

Finally, at least one former member of WIRC resented the fact that the HUD chairman had an independent and direct channel to the White House in his role as the HUD Secretary's agent for the NCPP. This WIRC member observed that he had no knowledge of the contents of reports to the White House and had no opportunity to influence these reports. It was held that this system was a serious violation of the vaunted principle of unanimity on all WIRC actions and effectively compromised the spirit of collaboration on that body.

The above illustrations simply suggest some of the difficulties inherent in the multiple roles of one agency as an interagency chairman, as an agency project manager, and as a Presidential agent. They demonstrate that actions taken in one role may be perceived by colleagues as breaches in understanding about other roles. It suggests, further, that the reconciliation of these roles were variously integrated by different HUD officials with varying degrees of sensitivity to the impact on and perceptions of other participants. It does not appear that the complexity of the HUD role was uniformly recognized or that its definition was clearly established and accepted by all participants.

#### Interagency Teams

The function of interagency teams was also an item of continuing discussion for the NCPP. The initial Washington interagency group (pre-WIRC) assumed the responsibility for both the confrontation and resolution of interagency conflict as well as the development of operational policy. As suggested elsewhere, its incapacity to perform the former effectively destroyed its capability to accomplish the latter.

With the establishment of WIRC and its subcommittee, these two responsibilities were, as a matter of practice, separated, although it is not always clear that participants recognized these specializations. WIRC came to be operated as a mechanism for reaching sufficient "political accommodation" on conflicts to permit agreement on operational policy. WIRC was widely recognized (and frequently criticized) as being "process-" rather than "issue-" oriented. A former WIRC chairman stressed the efforts made to develop that body as a forum for consensus and a mechanism for reaching pragmatic operating agreements.

The subcommittee, however, was not operated and was not perceived by all its members as a consensual body. It was here then that program and interagency issues and conflicts were constantly confronted and frequently unresolved. It was here that the truly divisive differences were initially processed and an often low level of accommodation reached. By this functional division of responsibilities, however, the WIRC was spared from heavy involvement in fundamental conflicts which correspondingly enhanced its capacity to reach operational agreements. Without the subcommittee taking the heat of sharp conflicts, the WIRC would undoubtedly have been less effective in reaching working agreements.

It is interesting, however, that the effects of this functional division was not fully appreciated by the immediate participants. A former WIRC chairman was apparently troubled by the constant conflicts on the subcommittee and wondered why the subcommittee could not agree more readily, as the parent body did. Subcommittee members reported that their WIRC principals frequently asked them to be more "cooperative" in subcommittee deliberations. Likewise, some subcommittee members believed that WIRC was too quick to suppress issues and unwilling to "take on the tough ones."

It seems clear, therefore, that the division of functions arrived at rather naturally by the WIRC and its subcommittee accounted heavily for the differences in performance between WIRC and its predecessor inter-agency group. With WIRC oriented toward accommodation and consensus, conflict had to be confronted somewhere and the subcommittee became the inevitable place. In these circumstances, however, it was unrealistic to expect both WIRC and the subcommittee to "act" in the same way.

The WIRC had other problems with its own subcommittee, particularly the OEO members. The latter reportedly often failed to comply with those WIRC decisions with which they did not agree and failed to keep the OEO/WIRC member informed of certain actions in the field which they preferred not to have monitored by WIRC. These organizational patterns are predictable on the basis of two factors in combination. First, whereas OEO had relatively less political power than HUD in resolving philosophical or funding issues in its favor if they went to (or threatened to go to) the White House, OEO's resources were so crucial to the NSP that OEO personnel had relatively greater effective power than HUD over many important matters at the regional-city level. Second, the OEO field personnel and substaff tended to be more responsive to the goals

of the agency as they understood them, than loyal to the bureaucratic hierarchy of the agency. The result was that OEO substaff "got good at not getting caught," according to one WIRC member. These OEO officials were characterized as playing their own game, often with detrimental effects on the overall NSP program.

#### Assessments of the Results of NCPP

Systematic and objective measurements of the accomplishment of the goals of NCPP were not undertaken as a part of the study reported here. However, we can make some qualitative observations on the extent to which after two years the actual achievements were congruent with the hopes of NCPP participants. This assessment will show that as of late summer 1968 there were some positive achievements, but also some substantial deficiencies.

#### Accomplishments of Primary Goals

Integrated Service Delivery System. The NCPP design called for an integrated service delivery system. First, core services, at least in the form of staff resources, were operating in most centers. However, core services, in their fullest implication as central intake, diagnosis, referral, case management and follow-up, were not fully developed in any centers. Second, the paucity of service programs initially installed in the neighborhood centers did not constitute a mobilization of services qualifying as an extensive system. Federal funding of programs requested had been slow as had been local program formulation efforts. There were difficulties in attracting and articulating existing services into the center systems. Thus, the results at the time of the investigation were a far cry from the desired system of comprehensive services designed to meet a wide range of local needs. There was, however, the creation of various embryonic systems which would clearly require major reinforcement and support if they were to develop into full-scale integrated service delivery systems. Third, there had been little or no progress in linking different programs; a concept which had proved difficult to operationalize and implement.

Citizen Participation. The degree of citizen participation in planning and operating the neighborhood service program ranged from tokenism to virtual full citizen initiative.

In Dallas, there was token citizen participation. Both Dallas city officials and a majority of FRT members believed federal requirements in this area were inappropriate for the Dallas Pilot Program. The extent of involvement achieved there was due to OEO/Washington insistence upon enforcing their citizen involvement guideline, backed by OEO's control of planning funds. To have accomplished more genuine citizen involvement would have required more support for the idea on the part of FRT and city officials. To generate this type of support in Dallas, where the dispositions are not as favorable as they are in other parts of the country,

would have required a federal strategy of education, attitude change and greater incentives. Essential to such a strategy would have been frank and open-ended dialogue between responsible and sensitive Washington officials, key regional federal officials and Dallas city officials. The Washington-field communication system did not provide for such dialogue.

In Boston there was a great commitment to citizen involvement. This was due in an important way to three factors: First, the city could identify a group in an appropriate neighborhood who had funds to meet the local share for the facilities. The group, the Ecumenical Council, did not appear to be an especially threatening one politically. Therefore, the city had an incentive and little to fear from quickly passing control to the CAA as sponsor and the Ecumenical Council as delegate agency. Second, the FRT chairman chose a pattern of open meetings in the neighborhood that was designed to maximize citizen participation. He was willing to make both the time and energy commitment personally and to pursue that meeting strategy without the full support or commitment of other FRT members. Third, the political climate in Boston is probably more ready for high citizen involvement than many other cities in the pilot program. One qualifying comment is in order. While the Boston strategy was to maximize citizen involvement starting with the Ecumenical Council as a delegate agency, there was considerable sentiment in the CAA and OEO/ Washington that the EC was not the most representative group which could have been identified in the North Dorchester-Roxbury ghetto. To the extent that this is true, the NCPP was built around the less representative group because of the early overemphasis on the facilities aspect of the pilot program (an overemphasis ascribed to HUD's eagerness, its own initially narrow conception of NCPP, and its failure to pursue a strategy of explicit and early negotiations with its collaborators).

In general, however, the citizen participation was more intensive in the 207 cities, but active citizen involvement was secured in several non-corporation cities. It has been suggested that the least citizen participation was effected in those cities where the CAA was closely related to the city government and where the corporation device was not utilized.

The adequacy of citizen participation depended particularly on the criteria of the judge. As a rule of thumb FRTs relied on the OEO member to judge whether the citizen participation requirement had been adequately met. These members, however, did not utilize a consistent measure in this respect—even though all NSP-IIs were approved as having provided for citizen participation, they did not signify a uniform standard in all communities. OEO field officials generally adopted a situational standard which was attributable in part to the conditioning effect of membership in the FRT and in part to an awareness of environmental and structural differences among the communities. The measure of citizen participation in planning was judged by some as dysfunctional and excessive, a burden to be borne. This attitude was pronounced among certain FRT members and local officials in the 207 cities. It seems clear that all participants



will never agree fully on the appropriate measure and form of citizen involvement. As one observer noted, "If you have about as many complaints that there was too much participation as complaints that there was too little, you probably had about enough participation."

Neighborhood Center Facility. The HUD grant for the neighborhood center facility was deemed to be a catalyst for the creation of the service system. It also served as the basic lure to attract cities into participation in the NCPP. At the same time, the early primacy of the facility detracted from the objectives of the integrated service system and citizen involvement. As the initiative clearly shifted from the mayor, the facility became less important and the planning for the service system became more so. In several cities, the question of the facility again surfaced in the wake of initially modest service programs for the centers and great uncertainties surrounding the prospects of continuing and expanding federal support for the centers. These cities expressed reluctance toward building a facility when the future support and expansion of the Neighborhood Service Program is apparently problematic.

There were, however, plans to build center facilities in all fourteen cities. Only preliminary work toward construction had been accomplished in several cities. For most participants in the NCPP, this lack of accomplishment is gratifying evidence that major program goals were appropriately ordered. For some few, however, the irony must be apparent--the contribution of the top manager of the NCPP--HUD's facility--would be among the last components to materialize.

#### Other Payoffs - Learning and Reinforcement from NCPP

As a result of the NCPP experience, lessons were learned, skills sharpened, attitudes shifted, philosophies shared more broadly, organizational changes made, and procedural changes initiated.

Greater Knowledge of Other Agencies' Programs. Clearly, the NCPP process broadened many officials' knowledge of other agencies' programs. Many persons interviewed commented on the fact that they could see future value in this familiarity with other agencies' programs, e.g., the OEO representatives in one region could see the possibility of joining forces with HUD, especially where the latter had planning funds not being fully utilized. Other participants suggested that this learning could be used to develop ad hoc program linkages in the interest of better problem solving. Likewise, greater shared knowledge forced a more open relationship among agency representatives--by reducing the protective mystique and private knowledge which are barriers to interagency cooperation.

Improved Techniques and Skills in Interagency and Intergovernmental Negotiations. Others, especially HUD officials, commented on having learned techniques and developed skills in working with interagency groups. For example, one commented on the delicacy of the task of manipulating the array of forces present in an intergovernmental program in order to achieve

progress and to reach consensus. He described a complex map of influence relationships among the actors which he used to guide his leadership initiatives. Some believe they better understood how to mobilize other federal officials and the techniques of cutting red tape.

A center project director discussed the impact which team membership has on the behavior of an official. He concluded that a federal team approach had increased substantially the responsiveness of each team member to the team's client. Our observations, as well, lead us to conclude that HEW and Labor and their state counterparts learned something of how to deal with CAAs and neighborhood groups; specifically, these bureaucrats learned that extreme patience is required and that a more elaborate type of technical assistance is required.

For their part, community people learned more about government through NCCP. For example, community people learned to differentiate among levels of government, getting away from an undifferentiated perception of "they." In some cases, community residents were discouraged by what they learned. In these instances, familiarity bred contempt.

More Sharing of Philosophies. Still others pointed to their own or some other individual's or group's attitude change. The HUD captain for two cities said, "I became enamored with citizen participation." Many believed that HUD representatives had become permanently less oriented to bricks and mortar and more social-service oriented. There is also a belief that many HEW, HUD, Labor and BOB officials have a newer appreciation for the need of citizen involvement and, therefore, share more of the OEO philosophy.

Changes Within Participating Organizations. The development of regional organizations in Labor and HEW have been encouraged by the NCCP. The pilot project provided the city of Dallas with the impetus for creating an intergovernmental liaison position. One FRT member believes that the NCCP forced the New York City government to increase its own internal coordination. A New York City official commented that the NCCP "flushed out" many state government people concerned with urban problems who became plugged into the local situation for the first time. The Center for Community Planning in HEW derived from the interagency dimension of NCCP much of its leverage for achieving internal changes--increased focus of resource allocations, more effective regional organization, and a philosophy more responsive to the changing demands of the urban crisis.

Procedural Streamlining. The NCCP stimulated a study of the application procedures and processing which led to a new awareness of both the cumbersome nature of existing requirements and efforts to simplify these procedures.

The success of the NCPP application processing study led to the extension of its methodology to other major grant programs. These inter-agency studies undertaken by the Joint Administration Task Force (an interagency group of assistant secretaries of administration) produced recommendations for shortening processing time by an average of 50% for all programs studied. These recommendations were ordered implemented by the President.

The NCPP also spawned a major effort to consolidate and simplify the application forms and requirements for NSP grant programs. Despite the limited test of the consolidated applications for the NCPP, the accomplishment of an interagency agreement on the use of a unified application and the intra-agency agreements designed to implement a consolidated application are regarded as important pioneering steps in bringing more flexibility and responsiveness to the categorical grant system.

Utilizing the Learnings in Model Cities. A senior OEO official suggested that a major learning value of the NCPP experience was the early identification of crucial interagency issues in Model Cities and a recognition of the need to resolve these issues quickly at the appropriate levels of authority. A senior HUD official also implied that the lessons of the NCPP had been learned and acted upon by HUD in Model Cities by pointing out that Model Cities had not had the launching difficulties experienced by NCPP. On the other hand, many NCPP participants complained that the important lessons of their programs were not being translated to Model Cities in such areas as federal field organization for Model Cities, the integration of state government role, and staff development for Model Cities.

Reinforcement. Participation in the NCPP reinforced the interest in such programs on the part of various federal participants. While some have subsequently become profitably involved in the Model Cities program and other intergroup efforts, others are frustrated that their NCPP experience has not been more fully utilized. Others were interested in participating in multi-agency programs with shared leadership, but would not be satisfied to participate in Model Cities (because of the stronger HUD leadership role).

Many local participants were interested in further association with programs of the NCPP sort, holding that this form of interagency inter-governmental action provided the greatest opportunity to make the federal government more responsive to complex urban problems and to mobilize multiple resources in the attack on these problems. However, all favored greater delegation of program decision authority to the interagency management mechanism and greater decentralization of authority to the field arms of the interagency management system.

The above general comments should not mask the great range of reactions to the different NCPP experiences. This range is illustrated by the comments below on different cities.

In both the New York City FRT and the Chicago-based FRTs, the experience was relatively positive for all teams interviewed. In retrospect, the experience of New York City officials was generally good, although it had been distinctly negative at several stages along the way. For New York State officials, the experience was generally positive despite the difficulty in developing a role for the state. Community leaders in New York City ranked the program a very positive experience overall. Likewise, for city officials in Chicago and Cincinnati, the NCPP was positively reinforcing.

In Dallas, the experience tended to be positive for OEO and Labor and to a lesser extent for the HEW official. It was negatively reinforcing for several higher level city officials, who said that they "kept getting burned," and for the two HUD representatives, who had been terribly frustrated.

The Boston experience was a good one for the HUD team captain, the state representative to the larger FRT meetings and to a lesser extent, the OEO official. For many others it had a negative impact: The CAA officials were generally very disappointed in the federal government's contributions. A key Ecumenical Council official interviewed felt that he and the Council had been "had" by the federal government—they would not participate if they had it to do over again. The neighborhood group which tried and failed to become influentially involved was bitter toward the CAA, the Ecumenical Council and the federal establishment—they would probably not try again to join up with the federal establishment. The Labor and HEW representatives were not positively reinforced.

In Oakland, the early history was very stormy, conflict-laden, and probably discouraging to many participants.

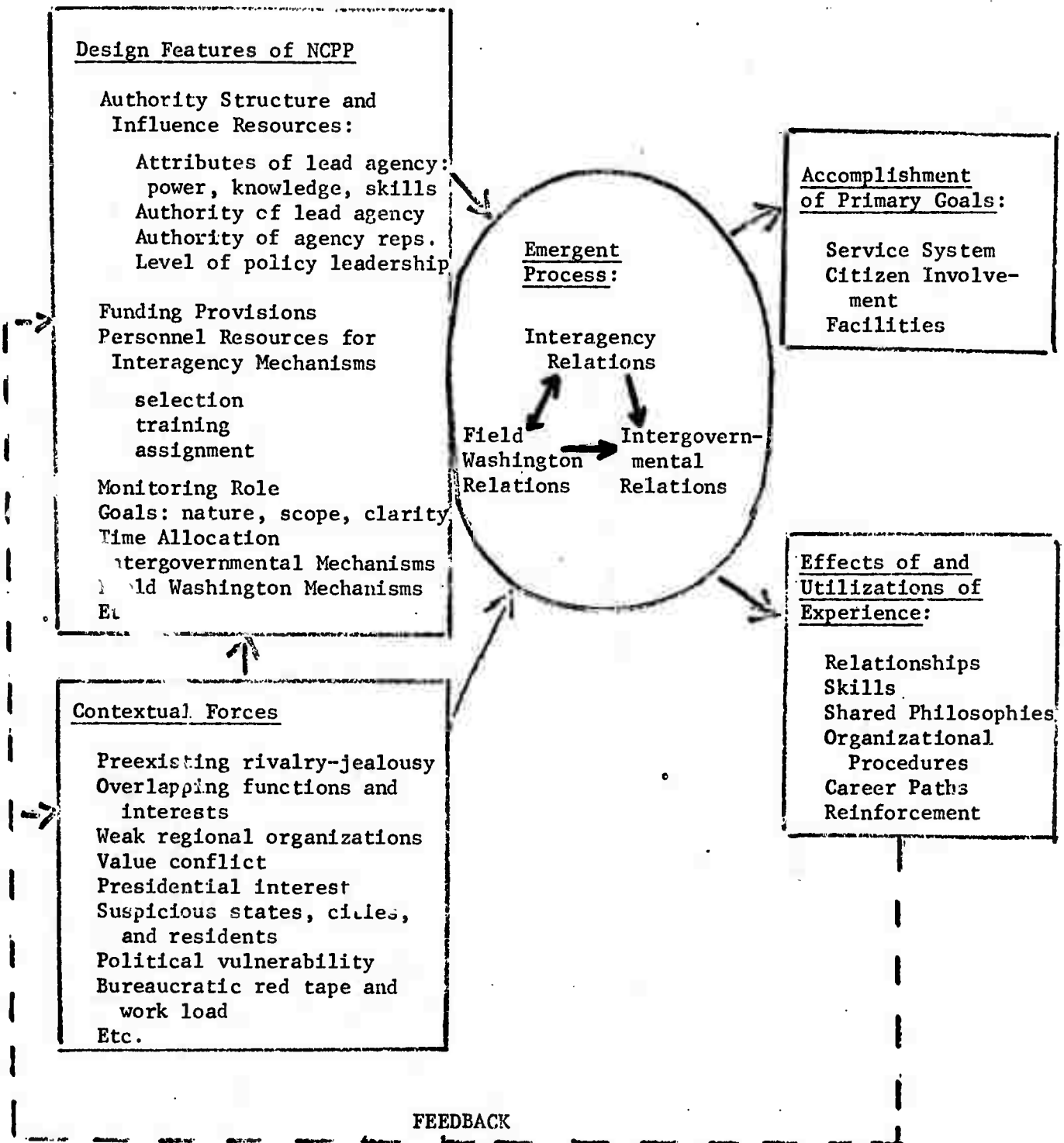
### Summary and Conclusions

#### Flow Model

Starting with an assessment of primary goals, we conclude that the accomplishments were limited. The program had been marked by delays in program and funding guidance, program approval, and facility planning. The quality of the neighborhood service programs and citizen participation mechanism fell below the expectation of many participants.

These two deficiencies were partly explained by the conflictful processes of the interagency management system. (See Figure 8.2.) The conflict issues and friction included the following: (a) Philosophic differences regarding the concept of citizen participation or at least the priority to be given it. (b) Funding questions such as how much each agency should contribute and for what purposes. (c) Disagreement and jealousy regarding the choice of HUD for the lead role. (d) Disagreement about the importance of involving state governments and methods for

Figure 8.2. - Flow Model Summary of NCPP Integrative Effort



(both during NCPP and potential for similar programs)

doing so. (e) Resentment toward OEO officials for their effective power to unilaterally determine crucial aspects of the NCPP which they funded; toward HUD officials for taking unilateral action or availing themselves of their relatively better access to the higher bureaucratic levels; toward an HEW official in one region for controlling a WIRC assigned consultant who was paid by HEW funds; toward regional officials who couldn't or wouldn't speak for their respective agencies; toward agency representatives, frequently Labor officials, who didn't participate in the interagency teams; and toward BOB officials who injected themselves strongly into substantive matters.

How does one explain the conflicts? They were a reflection of many of the enduring forces in the urban interagency environment, including the philosophic differences regarding citizen participation, the rivalry or jealousy about leadership assignments in the urban field, bureaucratic red tape and work load, and so on.

However, the conflict was exacerbated by features designed into the NCPP management system, including limitations of various kinds: (a) Limited power of HUD to require participation, a condition which must occur before collaboration could emerge. (b) Limited agency authority vested in regional officials and WIRC representatives. (c) Limited financial resources. (d) Limited leadership and collaborative skills of the type required by the normal authority of the Convenor Order. (e) Limited personal commitment of many participants to the concepts of NCPP: and/or limited time availability for the program duties. (f) Time constraints.

In addition to the more or less direct effects of interagency conflicts on the accomplishments of the program, there were indirect effects via the impact of these conflicts on other sets of relations. For example, WIRC's preoccupation with its internal relations had adverse effects on the quality of field-Washington communication. Similarly, manifest conflict among FRT members and other evidence of a lack of coordination among federal agencies discouraged local officials and lowered their confidence in the federal government's management of the NCPP.

On a more positive note, the analysis acknowledged a large number of integrative consequences of the NCPP experience: interagency relationships were strengthened, skills were upgraded, philosophic premises became more widely shared, and so on. Through feedback processes these outputs of the effort tended to modify the field of forces in this particular interagency community and aspects of the design of NCPP and future interagency programs.

For purposes of achieving clarity in this summary, we have traced through the consequences, forms and causes of conflict. However, the NCPP experience also contained some impressive examples of efforts to build collaboration. Most notable was the effort of the first chairman

of WIRC. He would reschedule meetings until all agency representatives could attend, he worked toward stabilized membership, used informal encounters to build interpersonal commitment among members, and brought enormous patience and persistence to the group processes. He typically avoided imposing the views of the lead agency, although he did as a measure of last resort escalate unresolved matters to the White House. Similarly, a few FRTs developed candid, responsive and cooperative internal relationships that included at least three members of the team. These relationships appeared to have developed because of some combination of the following favorable conditions: stable memberships, good leadership, compatible personalities, mutual commitment to the concepts of NCPP, and above average individual competence such that mutual professional respect was readily established.

The above is a broad analysis of the relationships among various aspects of the interagency effort. The chapter has indicated many more specific and complicated relationships; for example, hypothesizing interactions between particular structural features and certain contextual forces. A causal chain resulting from low formal authority and value conflict presents an illustrative detailed analysis.

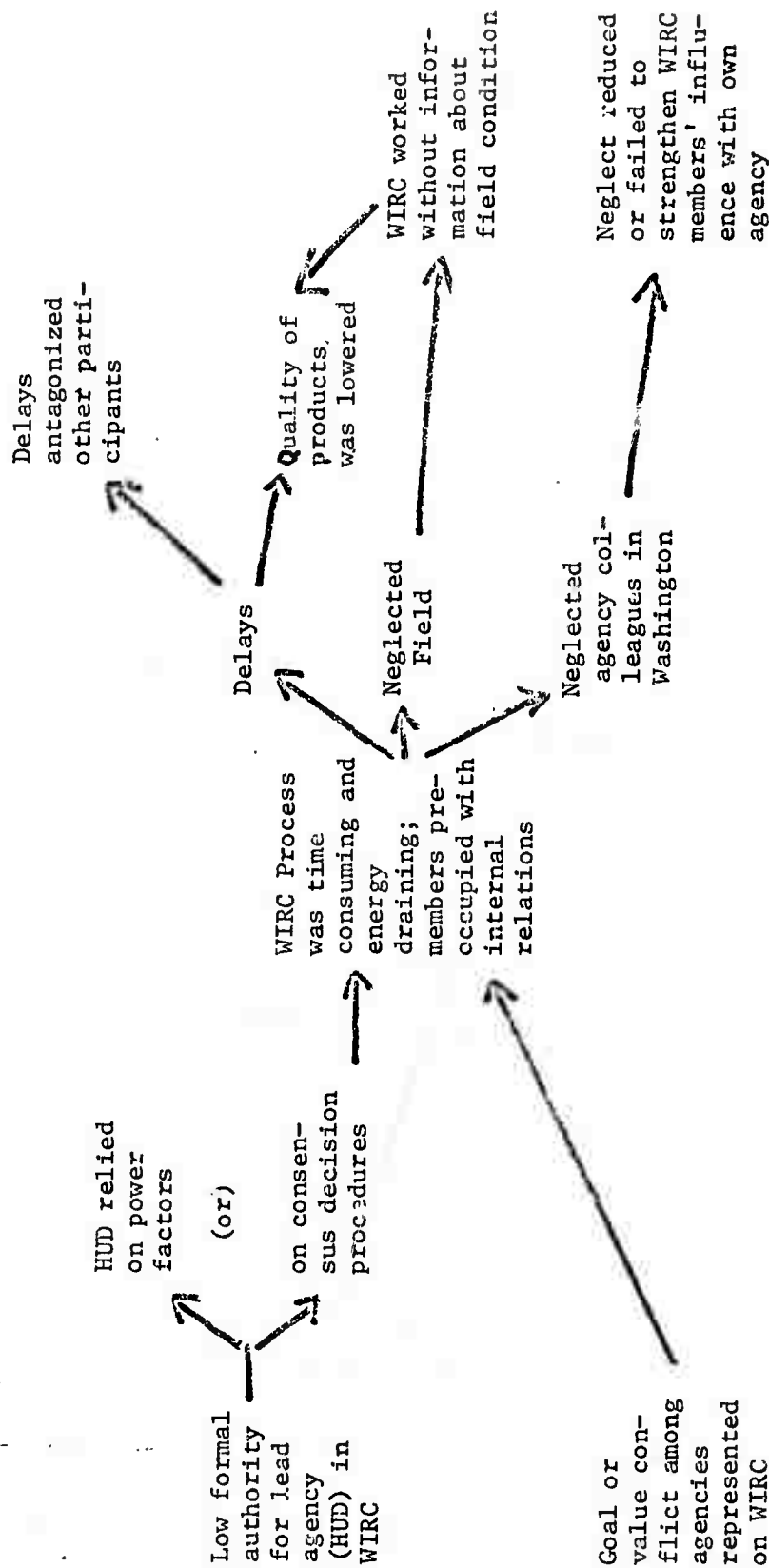
Low formal authority of the lead agency increased its reliance on other forms of power (which usually were not available to HUD in this case) or decision making by consensus. (See Figure 8.3.) The fact that consensus decision procedures in WIRC were accompanied by goal or value conflict made the decision process extraordinarily consuming of time and energy. The time required to reach decisions delayed guidelines and approvals, which in turn antagonized local participants and had a depressing effect on the quality of the neighborhood service proposals. WIRC's preoccupation with its own internal relations tended to reduce its sensitivity as a group to its interfaces with FRTs in the fields and the sensitivity of individual members to other groups in their own agencies. Not communicating with the field limited understanding of vital developments in various projects. Losing contact with agency colleagues sometimes created suspicion toward the WIRC members and tended to reduce their ability to secure compliance with the interagency decisions.

#### Interaction Dynamics and Third Party Roles

The NCPP required a great deal of joint decision making and involved significant identity interactions.

Because the program was an innovative one, both in the conception of the program and in the interagency and intergovernmental complexity of its management system, a high order of creative problem solving was called for. Also, because the pilot program was not based on newly appropriated funds, imaginative processes would be required to determine the existing funds in each agency which could be reallocated to support the program in order to achieve a combination of complementary agency resources (e.g., funds for planning, consultation, training, core services, service programs, etc.).

Figure 8.3. - Causal Chain Based on the Interaction of a Structural Characteristic of NCPP and a Contextual Factor





Our conclusion is that the program generally was marked by an absence of problem solving as we have defined the process in Chapter 2. Instead of problem solving which would lead to integrative solutions that would reasonably satisfy the needs and preferences of all parties, issues tended to be bargained until they were compromised, often in a way that failed to satisfy any party. Our explanation for this failure to produce integrative solutions can be framed in terms of the way bargaining and identify conflict interfered with problem solving.

We have stressed that conflicting philosophies and scarce resources led to bargaining over goals, policies and contributions. The main difficulty is that these major issues were left unresolved so long. Therefore, they tended to be implicated by every decision that came before an interagency group; many of the decisions otherwise could have involved minor options for implementation. With ambiguity continuing about the relative size of each agency's contribution, a representative could prejudice his agency's bargaining position by certain problem-solving behaviors, e.g., spontaneous references to the types of funds in his agency that might be tapped for the program. With ambiguity continuing about the priority of maximizing citizen participation versus rationalization of the delivery system, there was a strong incentive for agency representatives to act unilaterally and sometimes deceptively in the interest of serving one goal to the exclusion of the other; the result was an improvement in that particular agency's bargaining position, but a deterioration of trust and in turn problem solving.

One way to have minimized the effect of the bargaining (which was inevitable in some amount) on problem solving would have been to have conducted interagency negotiations at the highest levels to reach early agreement on program goals, roles and contributions. Thus, the two processes would have been separated by time and place with the relative shares roughly determined in advance by agency heads (with or without White House pressure). The program managers would have been better able to use problem solving processes to define program guidelines for the field and to put together the various types of required funds. Incidentally this point ties back to the earlier analysis; early high-level negotiation would have diminished the demoralizing chain of consequences we identified with low lead authority and significant value conflict.

Expressive needs as well as more instrumental ones were at stake in this program. Several dimensions of identity typically became salient in the interagency (and also intergovernmental) transactions: Leadership-subordinacy, conceptual competence, constituency orientation, and style.

Consider the leadership-subordinacy issue. Those Bureau of the Budget officials who played important roles in the early development of the concept of the program endeavored to continue to play a central role in the substantive discussions of the procedures and guidelines to the field. The HUD chairmen were eager to establish their centrality in

general and their leadership role in particular. Thus, the identity demands of the BOB and HUD officials were competitive. And even greater rivalry for leadership status existed between OEO and HUD. For their part, Labor and HEW resented and resisted any definition of the situation which implied their subordinacy--and both the formal lead role of HUD and the high effective power of OEO tended to have such an implication.

Interestingly a similar leadership-followship identity conflict complicated intergovernmental decision making. When Dallas officials and regional officials of the federal government were negotiating the city's participation in the NCPP, much of the behavior of the two groups in this interaction setting was attuned to their respective identity claims. Each preferred to see itself and be recognized as having taken the initiative. The city was very sensitive about participating in federal programs. Federal officials, for their part, were not willing to be seen as merely reactive. Each tended to violate the other's preferred identity.

In one way or another officials of all of the agencies were sometimes treated by the others in ways that tended to question their conceptual capabilities. For example, HUD was seen as ill-equipped conceptually in both delivery systems for social services and citizen participation.

Typically officials of each agency wanted to preserve and reinforce the agency's dominant identification with a particular constituency or group. OEO was identified with the poor and anti-establishment groups, HUD with city hall, Labor with state level groups, such as the State Employment Service, and HEW with the established Education and Welfare offices at the state level. Thus, frequently a member of the Federal Regional Teams would make a competitive effort to have the collective identity of the team reflect his preferred identity.

In some cases, an agency official would prefer to change his own current identity. In Boston the regional team representing four federal agencies held its meetings with neighborhood leaders and officials of local agencies in the ghetto neighborhood. Discussions with local leaders were carried on under conditions more familiar to the neighborhood residents and OEO than to the other federal officials. Meetings were held in the evenings, in uncomfortable surroundings, and were loosely structured. The ghetto meeting process was time-consuming and inconvenient for federal officials. It is true that the unfamiliar format tended to deny the federal executives their normal identity, a situation which the Labor and HEW officials resented. In this case, the HUD chairman of the federal team preferred to establish a new image more identified with the local community. Thus, he preferred to establish and reinforce a new identity rather than to reinforce a prior identity. His was the exception rather than the rule.

Operating style was another dimension along which the preferred images of agency representatives caused conflict. OEO officials typically wanted to be seen as purposive, risk-taking, and innovative. Instead of confirming OEO's preferred identity, other agency officials sometimes regarded them as irresponsible and unethical (not playing according to the rules of the bureaucratic games).

A HUD official wanted to be seen as careful, responsible, working for social improvement over the long haul and through the establishment; instead, the other members of the FRT treated the HUD chairman as an "old maid."

The above are only illustrative of the identity conflicts which complicated interagency bargaining and interfered with problem solving. The substantive decisions not only suffered in quality, but were delayed in a way that greatly affected the program adversely.

There was abundant need for the full range of third party interventions--to help build cooperative interagency groups, to directly influence the resolution of differences among participating agencies, to modify elements of the management system, such as personnel assignments, to facilitate conflict management progress, etc. Two agencies--HUD and BOB--had both a high level of interest in effective management of the interagency conflict and attributes that enabled them to make one or more types of intervention. Their interventions will be systematically reviewed in Part III.

## CHAPTER 9

## ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL COUNCILS OF FEDERAL URBAN AFFAIRS AGENCIES

Introduction

This chapter treats the efforts of the Office of Executive Management (OEM) within the Bureau of the Budget to promote interagency collaboration among regional directors in four federal departments concerned with urban matters, namely, HUD, OEO, HEW, and Labor. With OEM's initiative and assistance, four regional councils were established during the second half of 1968 on a trial basis. One focal activity for this study was a conference held at Airlie House near Washington, D. C. in July, 1968, which convened the directors representing the four agencies in four regions for the purposes of introducing the Regional Council concept and considering its merits.

The conference was chaired by OEM. The management of this conference as well as the preliminary and follow-up activities represented an experimental effort by OEM to establish for itself an institutional role as a facilitator in the federal bureaucracy. This report will attempt to document and assess the efficacy of OEM's third-party efforts.<sup>1</sup>

Development of an OEM StrategyBackground on OEM

The OEM had been in existence a year when it embarked on the Regional Council Project. Early in 1967 the Director of the Bureau of the Budget had initiated an evaluation of the Bureau and had enlisted the counsel of a group which included knowledgeable individuals from outside the Bureau. The evaluation had been prompted by a recognition that "major social legislation of the past two years has yielded many program, funding and management problems--in particular, (a) growing interrelationships between federal programs, and (b) the growing importance of federal field operations."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The chapter is based on field observations and interviews conducted at various stages in the evolution of the OEM project from July to October 1968. I am grateful to Michael Dean, Research Assistant at Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, for his assistance in conducting this study.

<sup>2</sup>"The Work of the Steering Group on Evaluation of the Bureau of the Budget," (38), p. i of preface.

Among other recommendations, the group proposed the establishment of a new Office of Executive Management within the Bureau. The proposal, which was essentially implemented as recommended, specified five major immediate responsibilities:

1. Government Organization. This activity involves analysis and improvement of the executive branch organizational structure. Activities to be undertaken include: development of concepts based on emerging problems and actual experience in meeting those problems; organization planning; analysis of organization strategies; establishing new departments; maintaining an institutional memory; and providing the technical capability required to handle Presidential reorganization plans and legislation, including backup testimony on the technical aspects and management concepts involved.
2. Systems Design. OEM will initially emphasize finding solutions to Great Society management problems and will have the flexibility to concentrate on issues of Presidential importance. It will build--and help agencies to build--management systems to enable effective management of interagency and intergovernmental programs--for example, grant simplification, grant consolidation, and evaluation and realignment of federal field organization as promised in the President's Quality of Government Message. It will review the development of new Presidential programs from a management systems standpoint.
3. Operational Coordination. Operational coordination will involve ad hoc problem solving and the exercise of immediate coordinating authority. This function involves doing better those activities in which the Bureau now participates and building institutional continuity into these functions in the form of a small staff. The Bureau's role is to deal with specific problems and seek to solve them in short time frames within the present system. The activities are all on an exception basis, and include:
  - Anticipating problems;
  - Coordination of related federal domestic programs with State and local activity;
  - Expediting of action on domestic social programs;
  - Communicating and defending Presidential positions; and
  - Identification of coordination problems requiring study and systems changes on the basis of the above experience.

4. Financial Management and Accounting. This unit will develop accounting standards and policies needed to govern executive branch relationships with state and local governments, universities, and contractors; oversee agency efforts to develop GAO-approved accounting systems; and represent the Bureau's financial management and accounting interests with GAO, Treasury, CSC, and Congress.
5. Special Projects. This is the analysis of important government-wide management problems--e.g., the management of the construction of public buildings, compensation systems and practices of government contractors.<sup>3</sup>

The OEM was comprised of eight professional staff members including the directors of two staff groups within the Office. The OEM staff generally conceived of themselves as internal consultants within the federal bureaucracy. More particularly, their client community was that part of the federal bureaucracy which was concerned with urban affairs. Many members of OEM had an organizational development orientation--they perceived their work as providing the client with organizational diagnosis, educational experiences, and counsel regarding organization and management. More generally, however, they all viewed themselves as catalysts for change and were willing to draw upon a wide range of approaches. The OEM had not been assigned responsibility for any programs or routinized services. Establishing the OEM had created a capability for which there was a perceived need but no effective and articulated demand from groups within the relevant interagency community.

Therefore OEM had both the opportunity and the burden to define its role and to develop its projects. One of OEM's early projects was to conceive, contract, and monitor two outside evaluation studies on the Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program--one on the effectiveness of the Neighborhood Center Programs. These studies brought a few members of the OEM staff into working contact with HUD, OEO, HEW and Labor officials in Washington and in the field; however, most of the contact with these agencies was made by members of the outside organizations contracted to conduct the studies. OEM's portfolio of potential projects also included (a) Civil disorders--identifying the key inputs of federal assistance needed in dealing with civil disorders; (b) Washington, D.C. as a Laboratory--playing a role in an experimental program to improve the delivery of social services in the capital; (c) Model Cities--role of friend in court to HUD in pressuring other participating agencies to develop procedures for directing resources to the Model Cities neighborhoods.

The Regional Council Project, including some preliminary work with the Atlanta regional directors, epitomized the type of change which the OEM staff wanted to promote and the type of institutional role which they wanted to establish.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

### Preliminary Work in Atlanta

Early in 1968, the OEM leadership became interested in focusing on the regional level in promoting integration among the urban agencies. Significantly, only at the regional director level does an official (below the secretary) have general responsibility for all types of programs within an agency. For example, in the Washington organization of HEW, there are separate assistant secretaries for Health, Education, Welfare, etc. These program-oriented subdivisions reappear again in the regional organizations below the regional director. The regional director positions with responsibility for achieving coordination among program subdivisions had been created only recently in two of the departments--HEW and Labor. Therefore, the nature of these positions might be less bound by tradition. Both NCPH and Model Cities had placed new demands on the regional organizations of these four agencies and had signaled the need for more decentralization of decision making into the field organizations.

A major obstacle to coordination at the regional level was that the regional boundaries of HUD, HEW, OEO, and Labor do not coincide. However, in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Atlanta all four agencies have regional headquarters. So even though there existed other regions with serious urban ills, the most convenient locations for collaborative experiments were in the regions represented by these four cities. Atlanta was chosen for the initial attempts to work with the regional directors from the four departments.

OEM sought support for the Atlanta experiment from the Joint Administrative Task Force (JATF) composed of the Assistant Secretaries for Administration from the four urban agencies. This group, which deserves to be studied itself, had been created by a Presidential mandate to shorten the lead time for grant-in-aid delivery to urban areas. JATF members had worked well together and had developed a great deal of camaraderie. They argued to sponsor similar initiatives on a regional level.

OEM approached the Atlanta regional directors late in March, 1968, and offered to provide two OEM staff members who would work under supervision of the regional directors, first to investigate the problems of collaborating across interagency lines in Atlanta and then to develop mechanisms for solving them. The Atlanta directors approved and two OEM staff members met with them on April 4, 1968 to present the concept of regional councils.

The Atlanta directors were sufficiently interested to proceed. The OEM representatives then interviewed 50 senior members of the four agencies in Atlanta concerning the problems of interagency, intergovernmental, and intra-agency collaboration. The findings were summarized and presented to the directors. The OEM staff members offered to help evolve appropriate interagency mechanisms whenever the regional directors were ready to proceed. The OEM representatives returned to Washington, leaving the initiative with the Atlanta officials.

When the Atlanta directors didn't pursue OEM's offer to help facilitate cooperation, BOB people, including many within OEM, began saying that the

Atlanta project had been a failure. However, OEM leadership concluded that this experience helped them define the kind of "contract" which they should make with other regions. The experiment increased their understanding of the power relationships among the four directors in Atlanta. The regional directors for HUD and HEW were both very strong personalities. OEM expected that conflicts generated within an Atlanta regional council would center around the relationship of these two men.

#### Oakland Task Force Report

In the meantime OEM officials were considering pursuing another specific lead that would bear on the regional council idea. They had received a draft of a report from the Oakland Task Force--and interagency group (HUD, Labor, HEW, OEO, Small Business and Economic Development Administration) which had investigated organizational and procedural factors which limited the federal establishment's ability to help solve the very severe problems of Oakland. The Oakland Task Force Report (OTFR) might provide the occasion for positive action in which OEM could play a facilitative role. But OEM was uncertain about how to try to utilize the Report. Therefore, in late June two OEM officials went to San Francisco to see the regional official of EDA who had played a key role in the development of the report. During this visit, the OEM group confirmed that the general recommendations of the OTFR were congruent with their own ideas. For example, both the OTFR and OEM were arguing for greater delegation to regions and an information system that enabled more rational planning.

OEM officials found varying degrees of commitment to the OTFR among the six regional administrators on the Task Force. A consultant and regional official with whom they met had played dominant roles in the OTF and now were trying to get approval of the final draft through meeting with individual regional administrators. OEM tried unsuccessfully to prevail upon the key authors to set up a day long meeting with regional administrators as a group. Then OEM offered to assist the Task Force leaders to translate their recommendation into actionable form. OEM knew that a document which did not make specific recommendations could be ignored by Washington and end up in someone's file. The Task Force authors were receptive to OEM's interest and offer of assistance.

#### Crystallizing OEM's Approach

After the OEM directors returned from San Francisco, they met with their respective staffs for three days in early July to decide what they should try to accomplish before January 1969, when a new administration would assume power; for example, should they devote effort to preparing transition documents or to trying new organizational devices? They also assessed the prospects for entry into the situations they would like to influence. The list of considered projects included working with the OTFR.

As a summary of this strategy session and its conclusions, part of a July 11 memo written by two key OEM officials, is reprinted below:



We began by agreeing that the principal negative characteristics of the present federal-state-local delivery systems in urban areas were a dispersal of authorities among agencies, a fragmented clutter of categorical grants and other programs, and a wide range of patterns of federal-state-local relations. In dealing with these problems, the accumulated and perhaps too conventional wisdom seems to be pressing us in the direction of a world of greater flexibility for funding at the local level, greater emphasis on technical assistance for cities in putting together responsive packages of developmental programs, and finally the creation of better mechanisms for coordinating, integrating, and managing federal urban programs....

In the short run our strategy ought to be to achieve a greater interaction among the principal federal agencies with major urban development resources so that at the local level a more functional integration of effort is achieved. Based on experience so far, it appeared to us that the most logical and available point of entry into the system would be at the regional level....

Such functional coordination mechanisms at the regional level will require some sort of Washington counterpart to deal with problems which cannot be solved at the regional level and to grant authorities in some orderly fashion. This suggested a second major element in our strategy, namely the structuring of the Economic Opportunity Council, or alternatively perhaps the Under Secretaries Group, so that a limited number of Cabinet level or Subcabinet level, program-oriented generalists can address the problems of interagency coordination at the regional level. We agreed that experience with assistant secretaries for administration in the JATF or the Washington CUP group has shown that this representation is incapable of coping with the substantive program issues involving coordination....

The third major element in this strategy would be the projection downward from the regional office complex to the city level of some kind of city action teams composed of generalist representatives from each of the principal agencies....

We agreed that this strategy for the present would have to take as its goal not so much the establishment of a smooth running machine to accomplish interagency programmatic coordination, but rather the setting up of tensions in the system which would press us toward an in-depth reorganization, the detailed organization of which we could not very well define at this point.

In sketching this strategy for change, with its implications for OEM, the above report also noted,

Most of us had a pretty fair notion of the advantages of being associated with an institution as prestigious as the Bureau, but the Bureau's preoccupation with budgetary issues, its predisposition in favor of observation and evaluation as opposed to an active interventionism, its permissive and nonauthoritarian traditions of staff directions were regarded as not unmixed blessings.

The OEM directors then met with their superior, the Deputy Director of the Bureau, who stressed another consideration of the OEM in selecting its work over the next several months. He urged OEM not to become too closely associated with persons in politically sensitive positions for it is possible that OEM would be swept out with the change in administration; rather it should develop an image of competence and be available for the new administration. He agreed that the OTFR was a good vehicle for OEM to get involved in important organizational issues.

There was no single Washington group to whom the OTFR could be submitted. The local Federal Executive Board (FEB) had sponsored the OTF. As head of the National Federal Executive Board, the HUD Under Secretary apparently felt a proprietary interest in the OTFR. Also HUD accepted some primary responsibility for such interagency issues because of its lead role legitimated by the President's Convenor Order of 1966. Therefore, the HUD Under Secretary had contemplated taking some action on the OTFR. Another official with an interest in the OTFR was the chairman of the Civil Service Commission. He, too, had played a key role in creating the FEBs. But the authors of the OTF were sure that the civil service agency wouldn't do anything with their report.

In mid-July, the two OEM directors and Deputy Director of BOB met with the chairman of the Civil Service Commission about whether OEM should take the lead in getting regional consideration of the report. According to one OEM spokesman, "The outcome was that no one said no." The following week this same trio from the Bureau attended a meeting in which several members of the Oakland Task Force expected to make a presentation to the senior agency officials present, which included the under secretaries and assistant secretaries for administration of the four principal agencies, a representative of Commerce, and the HUD director of Model Cities program. As the meeting developed HUD Under Secretary made some preliminary remarks and the OTF made a brief report. According to the report of one person at this meeting, when it became apparent that the HUD Under Secretary wanted to congratulate the OTF for their "scholarship" but to subsequently evaluate the substance of the report with an inter-agency group, the Deputy Director of BOB disagreed sharply saying, "let's not evaluate the recommendations of the OTFR, let's implement them." None of the other agencies took sides on the conflict. Reportedly, the HUD Under Secretary finally challenged, "Do you have a plan for getting at this?" The Deputy Director of BOB confirmed that OEM could come up with a plan. Someone asked, "When? Tomorrow?" The BOB reply was "yes." The fact was that OEM had already developed a plan, which they could now touch up and submit.

### Under Secretaries' Approval to Proceed

The Under secretaries group, chaired by the HUD Under Secretary, met on July 24 to consider the OEM proposal contained in a document entitled, "Structure for Implementation of the OTFR." OEM requested approval for the establishment of regional councils in San Francisco, Atlanta, New York and Chicago, which would be encouraged to address a range of the region-wide, programmatic problems already identified by the OTF, the JATF, and others. The document also requested that the following Washington-field structure be recognized to facilitate the work of the regional councils (also see Figure 9.1):

#### Under Secretaries Group

Key to the rapid settling of policy problems is easy access of the field and Washington staff level participation in this effort to the generalist policy level of the principal departments and agencies involved. This will require the convening from time to time of the under secretaries group, which will be chaired by the Under Secretary of HUD.

#### JATF

The first problems which must be addressed are essentially management in nature, and it is therefore appropriate that the administrative assistant secretaries should act in concert as the more frequent Washington level interagency review mechanism for settling issues which emerge from staff level consultation with the incipient regional councils. The already existing JATF is perfectly suited to perform this function and would refer to the under secretaries policy and programmatic problems which cannot be resolved by the JATF.

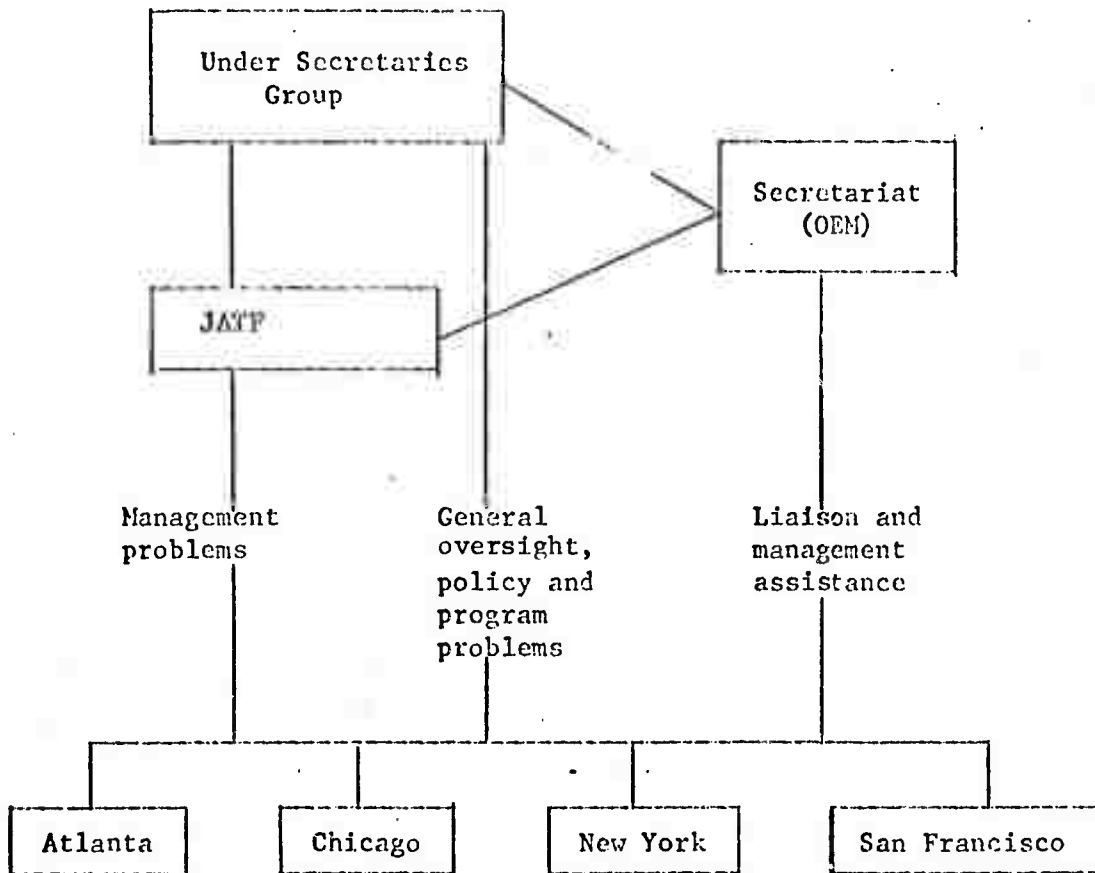
#### Secretariat

The Office of Executive Management (OEM) in the Bureau of the Budget will act as a secretariat to both the under secretaries and the JATF as well as the channel for communication between the regional directors and the Washington agencies acting in concert. In addition, OEM would work closely with the regional directors, closely involved with the staffs of the administrative assistant secretaries, to work out the implementation of the field structure, the Washington participation pattern, and the programmatic and management problems which should be addressed.

More definitive action by the under secretaries' group approving the four councils and the recommended structure did not come until later--after the Airlie House Conference. However, July 24 meeting did result in a decision to further consider the idea of regional councils and an understanding about the next steps: (1) each under secretary would advise his four directors about the outcome of the July 24 meeting regarding the idea

Figure 9.1

The Temporary Washington-field Structure Proposed by JEM  
to Establish the Regional Councils



of regional councils; (2) a two-day conference of all regional directors from the four cities would be held to consider establishing regional councils; OEM would organize the conference.

OEM developed specific plans for the conference and sent them to the HUD Under Secretary for approval. Then in a phone conversation with him, a Budget Bureau official obtained what he thought was approval to proceed. Later it became clear that BOB didn't have HUD's approval.

However by this time OEM had invited 16 regional administrators. As it happened, a new housing act had just been signed and HUD had planned to bring in their own regional directors for the same two days which OEM had designated on the conference invitations. The invitations were not withdrawn by BOB, rather the matter was allowed to continue ambiguously.

Then the HUD meeting of regional directors was cancelled. When HUD still did not give the okay on OEM's conference, OEM officials inferred that there was additional resistance by HUD. HUD management was considering a reorganization that would require convening the same regional directors in the Fall. HUD officials were concerned that their regional officials would be overloaded.

OEM met with the HUD's director of Model Cities. The latter gave a variety of arguments against OEM's proposed meeting of regional directors in August. After the OEM officials probed for the more compelling considerations involved, the HUD official said that there were a lot of people who saw BOB as making a bid to take over interagency programs in a way suggested by an earlier high level task force report.

Then the directors of OEM decided to get their boss and the Under Secretary of HUD together. Meanwhile the conference invitations were still out, as HUD and BOB were playing a waiting game. A week before the conference a group of top level HUD and BOB officials met. It is reported that the Deputy Director of BOB led off, "We think this is the right thing to do. If we wait until November, we won't get it done. However, we will not do it without HUD's enthusiastic cooperation. It's up to you." Finally, HUD agreed to proceed as planned.

Then the OEM directors talked individually to all under secretaries, all agency representatives on the Model Cities working group and all JATF members. These meetings were designed to enlist as much support and to allay as much fear as possible relative to OEM's conference and the role it was assuming.

Against this background, OEM was pleasantly surprised that the Under Secretary of HUD spoke as positively as he did on the first night of the conference; and that there was generous participation by under secretaries in the conference.

### The Airlie House Conference

All but one of the sixteen regional directors from the four regions involved attended the mid-August Airlie House Conference. The San Francisco group was missing the Labor official, but did include additional regional representation from the Small Business Administration (SBA) and Economic Development Administration (EDA) because of their participation on the Oakland Task Force. The two OEM directors served as co-chairmen. They viewed the two-day conference as potentially important not only in determining whether the regional council idea would get off the ground, but also in influencing how OEM would be regarded. Therefore, the account of this conference will focus on the activities of OEM as a third party trying to promote (a) a positive dynamic among directors of the same region in general, (b) the regional council concept in particular, and (c) its own involvement and facilitative role.

The schedule of the activities which occurred during the two-day conference is presented here to give the reader a quick overview:

#### Tuesday Evening:

Talk by Under Secretaries of HUD and HEW

#### Wednesday Morning:

Regional council model - OEM

San Francisco - Oakland Task Force report

Atlanta - Experience with the Atlanta Project

Chicago - Report on interagency coordination

New York - Report on interagency coordination

#### Wednesday Afternoon:

Caucuses by agencies - impact of regional councils on agency field structures

Panel discussion with The Washington Interagency Committee for the Model Cities Program.

#### Wednesday Evening:

Plenary - Dialogue with under secretaries, agency consensus report

#### Thursday Morning and Afternoon:

Plenary - Review of progress and objectives

Regional caucuses - Construction of action plans for each regional council

Plenary - Review action plans and prepare recommendations to under secretaries, etc.

Opening Session Tuesday Evening

At the opening session there was an impressive representation of under secretaries and assistant secretaries for administration. One OEM director started the conference by identifying OEM and its purpose. His remarks included the following:

We represent the Office of Executive Management. We try to work with you to improve the management of the Great Society...Although we are on speaking terms with the money side of BOB, we are prepared to take testimony in confidence...We in O&M see the need to relate people at regional level more. Whereas there has been inter-agency relation at the Washington level, there is too little at a regional administrative level.

In keynoting the conference, the Under Secretary of HUD explained the history of problems of interagency collaboration among the Great Society agencies and identified lessons learned from the Oakland Task Force, the JATF, Model Cities, NCPP, FEBs, etc. He reported that the under secretaries had agreed to meet and deal with divergent philosophies, different regional boundaries, and different administrative practices. The regional directors were invited to decide how far the Oakland experiences can be generalized, to identify the philosophical differences among agencies as agenda for the under secretaries, and to point out areas of "headquarters malfunction." Finally, he challenged the conferees by noting that the upcoming presidential campaign would debate alternatives to federalism, a debate that would reflect gnawing impatience with current institutions. He concluded that their institutions must change! The Under Secretary of HEW also addressed the conference, supporting the previous speaker's remarks.

Following these formal remarks, the session was more or less thrown open to the group. Interestingly, the co-chairmen repeatedly primed the group for discussion but then didn't allow it to occur. It was as if they were so afraid they wouldn't get the lively interchange they wanted, that they felt that one of them personally had to respond to each participant; for example, one of them reassured the HEW Atlanta director that his critical remarks were consistent with the purpose of the conference, rather than allowing another to pick up on the point. A procedural announcement served to end the evening's discussion while there was still considerable interest on the part of individual participants in making a new point or rebutting one that had already been made. The session broke up and participants engaged in conversation around the bar.

One co-chairman conferred with three consultants about the session planned for the following day in which they were to report on their respective experiences with interagency collaboration. The consultants included one associated with the OTFR, one who had previously consulted with two of the urban agencies and the author of this volume because of his role in evaluating the NCPP. It was decided that it was more important for the participants to have discussion time than to provide more input from outside the participant group.

Wednesday Morning Session

One OEM official presented a framework for viewing the concerns of the conferees. He distinguished among interagency mechanisms at the Washington, Regional and local-state-city levels. He also distinguished among the activities of program planning, program execution and program evaluation, suggesting that the concepts give the group a common way of talking. Putting the two sets of distinctions into a matrix, he suggested that each cell represented a possible focus for the conference's agenda over the next two days. His remarks helped to summarize the current situation, thereby placing the group's task in perspective. It also provided a cognitive map for working on the substance of the participants' interdependence.

He went on to elaborate many barriers to greater collaboration, listing them under the heading of "Minus Factors." The list consisted of: limitations of time; lack of authority at the regional level; inadequate staff; an absence of agreed-upon objectives; inconsistent organizational patterns (different geographic boundaries, headquarter locations, and degrees of authority vested in regional offices); different constituencies; risk resulting from lack of organizational rewards for collaboration and multiple signals from agency superiors. The manner in which he portrayed these barriers indicated that he took them seriously. In addition to directly sharpening issues for the principals to these interagency relationships, his comments contained two other messages: first, he was establishing that OEM was knowledgeable, not naive regarding the constraints within which the principals had to function; second, he was suggesting to the principals that perhaps they didn't need to go through a process of ventilation about those factors that keep them apart.

He next turned to the "Plus Factors," showing a nearly blank page of newsprint and remarking, "I haven't heard as much on this side, maybe we can get more on this today and tomorrow. I have heard just one plus factor for collaboration, namely that you can't really do the job alone." Against the backdrop of more comprehensive treatment of the minus factors, this abbreviated but pregnant reference to plus factors appeared to be a third-party attempt to induce the principals to enter into integrative work as early as possible.

His treatment of his next topic illustrates an interesting aspect of the structure of this situation. He posed, "What is the task?" and then said, "We want to test regional councils. If it doesn't make sense to you, this is the time to say so, because otherwise you'll be..." Regardless of how he finished this sentence, the implication was that if the regional groups didn't take some initiative in their own way, a structure would be imposed upon them. This intervention not only stated an agenda in action terms, but also created a new cost to inaction, namely another instance of solutions devised in Washington being imposed upon the field. Given a conference of limited duration the OEM third party was providing a sort of deadline for the four directors of a region to organize themselves.



As if to underscore the above point, the OEM official then said "What do you as embryo regional councils want to go to work on? For example, is there interest in the recommendations of the OTF, namely creating a data system and rationalization of the field organization?" Thus, the third party not only asserted a common identity for the principals but he did it in a way that alluded to de facto regional councils almost as a fait accompli.

Having delivered the mild threat of a unilaterally imposed regional structure on the field, he offered some positive incentive. He spelled out how OEM could help regional directors who wanted to increase their collaboration with each other, by contributing staff, by serving as their lobby in Washington, by playing an intermediary role wherever appropriate.

The OEM official tried to enhance the credibility of the current opportunity and, therefore, the principals' perceptions of the probability of being successful in developing more initiative in the field by reassuring them that the under secretaries were now more prepared than in the past to listen and to help. Then as if to repeat the warning that "this offer is good for a limited time only," he added that "the under secretaries are going to be on our backs" for evidence of progress. The meeting recessed briefly for coffee.

We have viewed his talk for its tactical elements, of which there were many, including some rather subtle ones. How effective were they? We will return to many of these tactical interventions as subsequent events have a bearing on them. However, in general terms the author believes that many of them did not realize their potential impact for two reasons, both of a timing character. First, these types of third-party interventions probably have relatively little impact unless the principals have been engaged in some dialogue with each other and with the third party. Second, a large number of distinct and different interventions tend to be less effective when delivered as a package rather than inserted individually into a stream of interchanges between the principals. Here we are referring to those interventions which described the current field of forces impinging upon the regional directors. It would have provided a more nearly optimum amount of stimulation if the speaker had concluded with his bid for integrative work in specifying the pluses of collaboration. Also, while it was important to establish OEM's relevant expertise as early as possible, it was probably less necessary to indicate its potential power over the fate of the participants at this point.

Following coffee, the regional groups met separately to decide what they would report to the total conference regarding the current status of interagency collaboration in their respective regions.

When the conference reconvened in plenary session, the San Francisco group was asked to lead off. A spokesman related the history behind the OTF; for example, he told how the mayor of Oakland helped them realize the way in which their fractionated, diffuse and complex structure made it impossible for him to do broad planning that involved federal money. The OEO-San Francisco representative described the difficulty of the negotiations among agencies. He referred to pricking the conscience of other agencies. He posed and

answered several questions: "Do we need to have an integrated federal response? Yes! Should it be flexible? Yes! But can we develop a structure in two days? No! Therefore, I hope that before we develop a new structure, we will negotiate our various roles and missions." The EDA representative from the San Francisco region spoke confirming the relevance of the previously developed list of minus factors, illustrating each point in terms of the OTF's experience:

The structure and process of putting the task force together involved surmounting all of these problems. Other agencies did not share our [DA's] enthusiasm for coordination. We had 10% of our national resources in Oakland. Regarding time, some agencies could attend meetings, others couldn't. The different agencies were getting different signals from their superiors. Regarding rewards, we had no assurance that we could get the attention required to take actions beyond the study. Regarding staff, some agencies had staff, but others didn't have it and for example, HEW would have to negotiate with constituent agencies. We had to buy outside staff. But regional directors did supply the task force with good members, e.g., two agencies placed their No. 2 men on task force. But they can't do this for city after city. I can't stress enough how important staff is to this effort and how significant it is that OEM can give us help here.

The linkages between Washington and our region were also relevant to other problems we had. We didn't know who in Washington would listen to the OTF report. We were lucky to get OEM to take an interest in this...We have had lots of masters. We had too many masters.

Then the consultant to the OTF described the process of the study and listed the recommendations of the OTFR. Immediately, the HEW director from San Francisco dissented from several of the conclusions of the report, e.g., to focus on Oakland. At this point, the presiding OEM official intervened and said that "the conflict re Oakland as a site is esoteric as far as this overall group is concerned." This intervention headed off what probably would have been an emotional argument among regional directors from the San Francisco-based regions.

The San Francisco group had gone on at considerable length presenting material not immediately relevant to the task at hand. It was clear that the Oakland Task Force members were primed on their own agenda and could not respond directly to a request for a report on current interagency collaboration in the region. In any event, one behavioral science consultant interjected that in his opinion much of the San Francisco group's presentation had not been responsive to the agenda. A discussion followed regarding the relevance of the report. This brief discussion of an unstaged variety showed again that there was considerable energy available for engagement if the agenda and format would allow for it.

The floor was then given to the Atlanta group. The HEW man made the presentation. He made several important points: that the inter-agency collaboration which did exist in Atlanta did not involve much personal-social interaction; that there was a lack of direction indicated for interagency collaboration; that there was a lack of awareness of what parts of their respective worlds were held in common.

Then he reported on the recent exercise in collaborative behavior at Atlanta initiated by OEM. After reporting the episode much as it was described earlier in this paper, he said;

We decided we were not ready to proceed, and should meet among ourselves. Therefore, we said to BOB "Don't call us, we'll call you." We decided to take a joint look at one NCPP project. We asked the Chatanooga FRT to do a staff paper on the way NCPP had developed. But then the paper didn't seem to relate to what we were trying to do. Perhaps that's why we four regional administrators didn't get together...Now, getting off that abortive exercise...

There are several preconditions for regional organization: First, we need to have unities of concepts, i.e., to have some direction. Second, we must have unities of process, i.e., if one agency takes initiative you can't leave the others dangling. Our major problem is, how to do it?

The OEO-Atlanta representative sounded a more negative note, saying he was not ready to buy a regional council.

Unless there is a decision about objectives, there is no advantage in eliminating the other minus factors...It does not help us to get together and aimably agree to disagree. I would list "objectives" as the No. 1 barrier to be considered; if you answer no to that question, you don't need to address the other barriers. ...If there had not been a BOB with sufficient clout, we would not be here. If there is not a whip outside our regional groups that says do it, it won't happen."

The presiding OEM official interjected to sharpen the issue. He asked whether there was disagreement that objectives is the primary question. Before anyone else could respond, he took a position himself in disagreement with the OEO-Atlanta representative. The HEW-San Francisco director also disagreed with the OEO-Atlanta official. The OEO-New York representative also seemed to disagree, in effect, by stating "The need is to have fewer directives from headquarters; then we can get together and be responsive to our regional problems."

There followed a debate on whether regional officials should create a structure to ensure dialogue before they can agree on what objectives they have in common. The debate was ended by the chair who said;

What forces bring agencies together, apart from BOB clout? I assume you have personal commitments to make the city a better place to live. If that is not a correct assumption, let's hear from you...but later. (laughter) We should move on to hear from Chicago.

The OEO representative reported for the Chicago region. He related some specific interagency experiences, noting (a) that planning funds of HUD and OEO had been allocated by some joint decision processes; (b) that OEO was trying to use HEW and HUD staff as members of evaluation teams; (c) that OEO had delegated the Social Rehabilitation Administration of HEW to be OEO's representative at the local level, thereby ensuring program coordination. He reported that OEO and HEW funded a work program on a proposal just a page and half long, noting that this represented "a risk we were willing to assume." He said, "In OEO our flexibility has enabled us to better link with other agencies. We have taken some risks by determining our goals at the regional level and then negotiating with other agencies at this level."

At this point the OEO-San Francisco representative asked the Chicago group for particulars on joint funding. The HEW and OEO Chicagoans joined in the response, both showing their pride in this venture. The OEO-Chicago representative continued,

We are working on the same wave length in many cities: Dayton, Cincinnati, East St. Louis, etc. During the Detroit riots HEW and OEO pulled together to attack the problems. Our problem has been to get Washington and local level people to do what we agree at regional level... We asked HEW to act as convenor for health problems.

He concluded his report by confirming that "It would help us to have staff assistance, consultant time, and to have some formal structure or authority." The Chairman, in an attempt to derive implications for other regions, asked, "Looking back, what pulled you guys together? You have somehow managed to crystallize some cooperative pattern." The HEW-Chicago representative said, "It is a personal thing. I know in my own office, when you get a request from HUD, you do it, even at expense of some of your own work." The HUD director added, "There are interchanges among our staffs. We learn that we can help each other." Labor, however, represented a special problem, which the Labor-Chicago director described: "We are so preoccupied with serious internal departmental problems and several new high priority programs. This prevents me from becoming more involved in the regional consortium." He also stressed the need for a statutory requirement for collaboration and for "someone to crack the whip." He said pointedly, "You can't depend upon personal relations."

The OEO-Atlanta official again expressed his skepticism about the regional council idea:

Maybe I am just by nature an anti-organization man; however, I believe this is also confirmed by the Chicago experience. The Chicago people were innovative not imitative. Maybe our objective should be to engage in program collaboration over the next four years, and not to specify a structure now.

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The chair turned to the New York representatives, and asked for their report. Labor-NY representative reported:

We do some things with OEO, less with HUD, and almost none with HEW, and not because of personal factors. We would support the idea of a regular council ordained from above. The OEO programs require collaboration. The NCPP and Model Cities programs have driven us into the clutches if not the arms of HUD (laughter)...Also I don't even know the magnitude of the federal money which goes into NYC. Our major problems in being effective would require help from BOB. We need more decentralization. Clearly we need more staff.

After the HEW director reiterated some of the above points, the OEO director said:

We have not ever met; we need to. I'd like to see a spontaneous process. I'm fearful of organization structure, guidelines; these always turn out to be constricting rather than enabling. We in OEO are afraid of structure. The real need is to think of innovative ways to reinforce each others' efforts.

The OEO-San Francisco official picked up on the theme; saying, "I think we can learn something from Chicago and perhaps vice versa. Our efforts should be pointed to an operating program like those mentioned by the Chicago people. While we in San Francisco have been pointed toward a study or structure, they have been putting interagency collaboration to work."

At this point, the OEM official presiding felt it necessary to respond to the many expressions of sentiment against a structure, sentiments that seemed aimed at OEM. "I can't say that there won't be structure imposed, but this is not our bag in OEM."

The meeting broke for lunch shortly. Let us review the effect of the pattern of the morning's work after coffee. Regional groups were asked to prepare some comments that might capture their experience in a way that could be understood by others. The San Francisco group had revealed its internal divisions. The Chicago group had expressed pride and commitment. The Atlanta group was conscious it had received the most outside help, but had made little progress. New York reflected their absence of any history of work as regional directors and seemed resolved to do something about it, reflecting the most dependence upon structure and BOB initiative. The sharing of diverse regional experiences tended to strengthen regional identification and promote friendly competition among regions, there were, as well, expressions of envy or congratulations among regional groups.

#### Wednesday Afternoon Session

The first hour of the afternoon was devoted to regional meetings to allow groups to react to what they had learned. Each was attended by an OEM staff member. The author learned little of what occurred in these meetings, except that the Atlanta group was somewhat demoralized.

For the second hour, participants met by agencies to review their common problems and what issues they should raise with their respective under secretaries, who were to attend the conference that evening.

This discussion was followed by a presentation by the top level Washington interagency committee responsible for the Model Cities program. The committee reflected a high level of tension among its members, they made no attempt to cover up their substantive disagreements, each articulating his concerns and point of view. They acknowledged that they had reached an impasse on an issue which they were going to take to the White House for settlement; namely, the question of how much authority would reside in the city government and how much in the local neighborhoods.

Additional aspects of this meeting are noteworthy. The HEW member of the Model Cities committee seemed intent upon reassuring his regional directors that he was working for their interests, e.g., increasing regional authority and regional staff. In somewhat of a contrast, the OEO member acted more antagonistic toward the regional participants whom he blamed, "One of the reasons why NCPP failed is that you regional administrators didn't always give your support." The HUD-Chicago official suggested that BOB was shrinking from its authority to seek reassignment of personnel among agencies. The Assistant Secretary for Administration for HUD added pressure, "We will need support from BOB." Under further pressure, one of the OEM directors described the "games" that go on between Congress, the White House and the BOB in a way which suggested that he personally didn't see how BOB could be counted upon to execute personnel reassignments. Later, addressing the Model Cities committee, the OEO-New York official made an impassioned plea for avoiding the requirement of mayoral concurrence which she believed would create even more skepticism on the part of residents. The tension erupted into several instances of direct or indirect blaming, an instance or two of impassioned speechmaking and many instances of sarcasm.

There were several potential effects of the discussion involving the Model Cities panel. The differences between OEO and HUD on mayoral concurrence dramatized the basic philosophical conflict between these agencies. The fact that the Washington interagency committee had reached an impasse (despite apparent genuine attempts on all sides to find some mutually satisfactory resolution) and was now taking it to the White House for a decision, were reminders of the frustrations and limitations of decision making among peer agencies. The physical postures of members of the Model Cities interagency committee at the table in front of the room signalled feelings of alienation. The majority of representatives also illustrated negative Washington attitudes toward the field, especially, scorn and low interest on the part of the HUD and OEO representatives. These are not the messages one would plan to supply to regional directors whose commitment to experimenting with more interagency collaborative mechanisms was already tenuous.

#### Wednesday Evening Session

The evening meeting opened with the following top officials in attendance; the number two men in OEO and the Labor Department, and the Assistant Secretary for Administration of HUD. No senior official was present from HEW.

The HUD regional directors led off with several of the field's grievances with Washington: "Not enough staff has been transferred to the field along with the increased responsibilities. It is hard for headquarters to keep hands off field details. Washington needs to focus on policy, policy clarification..." "There are not enough signals from Washington about commitment of resources..." Washington is "preoccupied with legislation..." "Before we had categorical programs; now we are packaging them. That's one reason we need more staff and flexibility." A senior agency official answered, "The reason that Washington is reluctant to let go is that it can't describe in measurable units what it is that the field is supposed to do. If they could, they would be able to let field personnel demonstrate their abilities."

The previous comment elicited the following exasperated response: "If you don't know what you want, why don't you turn the field loose and synthesize the reports that come in?" The answer, provided by the senior official of the last speaker agency was, "We will have to keep our hand on things as long as we have to fight our battles with Congress."

An OEO regional director introduced another theme. "Let's not structure. We can create a monster. Also I need to work with the Department of Agriculture which is not represented here. I don't want to have to get BOB permission." Another OEO director endorsed the sentiment. "I don't want much BOB involvement." An OEM official explained, "We don't intend to enforce a common pattern..." The HUD member of the Model Cities committee added to the pressure on BOB. With a bit of scorn he said, "I don't understand what the field would do with the structure being discussed." This remark--perhaps because of its tone--elicited angry responses from the HEW and HUD directors from Atlanta.

By now it was a donnybrook. A Washington official asked, "Could the field have done the NCPP any better than we did?" The OEO-Atlanta official was quick to reply, "Yes, we wouldn't have selected a city for a pilot project where the CAA was falling apart." The OEO-Washington official argued "Well, I don't know about that. I recall that we sat around my desk and elected the fourteen cities, with one criteria being that there be a good CAA." Another regional official countered with some sarcasm, "Washington never asked me about the suitability of the fourteen cities for NCPP, the nine cities for the concentrated Employment Program, and the seven cities selected for the Model Cities program."

HUD and OEO regional officials had had their turns at bat; now it was Labor's turn. One regional director of the Labor Department reported on the inadequacies of staff; the fact that he didn't get commitment from other agencies on CAMPS; the fact that the Department didn't have the discretionary money which the other Great Society agencies did and the reluctance of many Washington officials to accept a new structure in the field. The Under Secretary for Labor answered, "The most important factor is that Congress specifies intent for money. When we try to use money flexibly, we get burned. We ought to be talking about the legislative packages we need." (He was in effect soundly booed because he seemed too far off target of the purpose of the conference.) In a heated interchange the HUD-Chicago director addressed the Labor Under Secretary and asserted that Labor is the most understaffed department at the regional level. Later the Labor official from Atlanta cited this as an example of how regional directors can help each other.

When the HEW contingent was called upon to report, one HEW director noted that no senior HEW official was present and announced that as an act of protest the HEW regional directors would decline the opportunity to report. After some evidence of amusement by many participants, and a signal of tacit support by at least the HEW-NY official, one senior departmental official called him on the tactic, saying he didn't see the point. The HEW representative then did report.

The confusion level of the meeting had reached a moderately high level by this point. The OEO-San Francisco official asserted what he thought was the purpose of the evening meeting, to which the presiding OEM official disagreed. Then the Labor member of the Model Cities communities, who was sitting at the back of the room and who tended to depreciate what he saw as the theme of the conference, said: "You can't have a structure without content. NCPP and Model Cities have not been pulled off yet. If we want to put regional councils to a test, let's put them to work on these programs." Then the meeting chairman, evidencing irritation at not being understood, asserted that the Model Cities visitors and the senior officials on the panel that evening could not assume that they know what the conference had discussed before they came, implying that therefore their critical comments (about no content) were based on inadequate information. The meeting ended shortly.

Overall, the evening session had not produced a productive interchange between field and Washington representatives. First, the field representatives had presented a monotonous chorus regarding the need for more staff, but had failed to provide illustrations of the interagency activities that would be enabled by added staff, and neglected to indicate why they perceived Washington to be unresponsive to these needs. Second, the spokesmen for the field had tended to perform as speechmakers and toastmasters rather than to participate in dialogue. Third, the senior agency officials were defensive and did not confirm the support for regional initiatives toward interagency cooperation reported by the Under Secretary of HUD the previous night.

At the end of Wednesday it appeared to this observer that too much input from the interchange with groups outside the regional participants had been planned for the conference. It was apparent that the primary and preliminary need was for the directors in a region to come to terms with each other, exploring the pluses and minuses of more collaboration, the forms it might take, etc. Once members of the regional group had done this, they could take advantage of an opportunity to meet with the senior Washington officials. This is precisely what happened informally after the meeting in the case of the Chicago group which had already achieved a collaborative spirit. They reported that they had approached one senior official on some matter and secured from him a promise of action.

#### Thursday Morning Session

One of the OEM officials opened the morning session by reviewing the highlights of the conference to date, and his own personal reactions. He recalled that the Under Secretary of HUD had sounded a good and promising keynote the first night, and that the diversity of regional experience reported Wednesday morning had been instructive and potentially useful, but that the Model Cities' and Under Secretaries' panels had brought things "crashing down on the rocks." In particular, he despaired at the fact that both Washington and the field had conditioned responses to each other, and did not engage in dialogue. He expressed his own frustration with the situation.



Then he reviewed the issues surfaced during the proceedings thus far. He pointed out that participants differed on the following: (a) Some wanted to negotiate explicit roles first, others to identify common goals first, others to get some structure first. (b) Some preferred a city-by-city approach, others a program or project approach, still others a client-by-client approach. Then he said: "Some seem to ask, why collaborate? This concerns me because I don't want to play games. If there is just tolerance, I don't want to invest my energy. We don't see a mechanistic solution, but an organic one. We in OEM can accept and work on a variety of approaches."

The HEW-Chicago representative stated "I don't see why this business of collaboration is so difficult. I need information from them, I need to give a little bit. We have to do this if it's for the general good of the community. I want to raise a question: What is the reaction in Washington to us giving a little bit? The fact is that bureau chiefs will not like it." An OEM official acknowledged the point, "Yes, you are seen as a traitor by both superiors and subordinates," but then he quickly committed OEM to do battle for the regional people. Others picked up the theme.

A period of miscellaneous discussion ensued. Then the Labor Director for New York said, "After an unstructured day and a half, we have to get structured. I don't think we have to go through a lot of apologetics. It has been important to express our frustrations and problems." The HEW-Atlanta official agreed with the need now to take some constructive steps, noting that he had "enjoyed the gripe session as much as the next guy." Others too were ready to work on some particular issues.

One of the OEM directors (who were co-chairing this session) then reaffirmed the purpose of the conference; namely, to facilitate separate efforts in each region to decide how to proceed and to determine whether and how OEM could be of assistance.

One OEM official suggested that the conference take the six recommendations of the OTFR report and decide what would be needed to implement them. But the HEW-San Francisco official objected, saying, "The problems in each agency are different. Therefore, we need to work as agencies." Then the HEW-Atlanta official said, "Wait, if we work as four regional directors from the southeast area, then we can accomplish more changes within an agency."

The level of desire to accomplish something was mounting and the Labor-New York representative appealed to the chairmen to decide what to do. The OEM-New York representative proposed that they divide into regional groupings, "where the work needs to be done!"

The confusion became almost complete. One OEM chairman recessed the group for coffee. The co-chairman arrangement had made it difficult for the conference leadership to respond to the several suggested strategies for proceeding with the conference work. Only one returned to the front of the room after coffee.

The chairman announced that he and the other OEM director would meet with Atlanta and New York respectively inasmuch as these groups had the least

formulated plans for how they wanted to proceed. This released the other two groups for an hour.

Apparently the Atlanta and New York groups made substantial progress. The Atlanta group especially coalesced. Significantly, the HUD regional director had to leave the conference and gave his deputy several interagency items he believed they should work on. The OEO representative agreed to participate, dropping the several objections he had voiced earlier in the conference and in the Atlanta group meetings. He did secure an agreement that they would call themselves the "no-name group," which somehow helped meet his objections to a structure.

Apparently the frustration had led to the need to get something accomplished, which became acted on in the small group meetings of Atlanta and New York. There had been a great deal of differentiation from each other, and ventilation regarding their common difficulties.

The participants met again in plenary session at 11:30 a.m. and heard the Chicago and San Francisco reports. The Chicago group presented a report to be submitted to the under secretaries group listing a dozen recommendations. The list was readily adopted by the entire conference.

After lunch, the HEW-Atlanta representative reported that they had decided to undertake work in six different areas. They would meet on a regular basis twice a month. OEM would be invited after the first session. The Airlie House would be reported to their state counterparts. In general the speaker reflected pride in Atlanta's past cooperation and present product.

The NY representative reported that they had decided to meet regularly, and invited BOB to provide immediate assistance.

#### Airlie House Outcomes

Unfreezing of Unfavorable Attitudes. A variety of attitudes underlay the skepticism with which the regional directors viewed the regional council idea and the Airlie House meeting at the outset of the conference. If OEM's project was to have any chance of success, its initial work with regions, in general, and the Airlie House experience, in particular, should have the effect of unfreezing certain existing attitudes and perceptions which were barriers to collaboration.

1. The indifference, antagonism, or suspicion with which many regional directors viewed their counterparts in other agencies needed to be unfrozen, giving way to an openness to new experiences and new impressions, so that hopefully positive regard might develop. Chicago, of course, was an exception: The HEW, HUD, and OEO directors especially already reflected high mutual regard.

2. The preliminary confusion and mild suspicion toward OEM/BOB needed to be eliminated. Ideally regional directors would develop clearer perceptions of OEM's role, come to trust its motives, have confidence in its expertise. Even in Atlanta, where OEM had done its preliminary work, OEM had not established a satisfactory working relationship with the regional group.

3. The regional directors' attitudes toward Washington were frequently marked by rebelliousness and passive resistance. Regional directors were skeptical that in the future they could expect more support and less interference from Washington. Also, in this particular context, they feared that Washington could impose a regional council structure, including organization roles, procedures and agenda. These regional attitudes of resignation had to be challenged, somehow disconfirmed, if they were to give way to (a) belief that the terms of the Washington-field organizational relationships could be renegotiated; (b) active, assertive, articulate attempts by regional directors to influence these terms; and (c) the confidence that the council framework could be used by regions to take the initiative, choosing emphases appropriate to them.

Airlie House appeared to be a productive intervention in unfreezing the negative interagency attitudes and the doubt and mildly suspicious views toward OEM. Not that there were any genuine "conversion" phenomena. It was merely that regional directors tentatively reappraised the relative costs and benefits of investing more of their own energy in the interagency network and of accepting OEM assistance. The Airlie House Conference had mixed effects on the field's skepticism toward Washington. On the one hand, the abortive panel discussions with the Model Cities committee Wednesday afternoon and the under secretaries and assistant secretaries Wednesday evening undoubtedly served to reinforce existing attitudes. On the other hand, the HUD Under Secretary had sounded a positive note in his opening talk, other under secretaries and assistant secretaries had participated positively. Moreover, OEM promised to help articulate and amplify the regional messages to other Washington officials and then to follow up with selective lobbying in behalf of the regional directors.

Diagnostic Conclusions. Airlie House discussions reached certain diagnostic conclusions regarding the problems of interagency collaboration at the regional level. It underscored the need to improve field-Washington communication as a precondition for other steps toward interagency integration:

Washington/regional communications. A tendency was noted on the part of some in Washington to suggest that we pretty much already know what the problems of interagency field coordination are, so let's get on with...It was clear from our discussions, and particularly the exchange Wednesday night between the regional directors and representatives of the agencies from Washington, that many of the regional directors did not feel that Washington has a perfect understanding of all the problems. The excitement, not to say hostility, of the regional directors was pretty apparent in that exchange, and even more so the following morning. Significant improvement in interagency collaboration at the field level probably requires, first of all, better communication between Washington and the regions, including a lot more listening by Washington. The system of regional councils relating to the under secretaries group, the JAFT, the Model Cities Working Group, offers a new opportunity for opening up these communication channels.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Report to the under secretaries group on Airlie House Conference on regional councils, August 13 - 15, 1968" (35), p. 2.

The Airlie House participants emphasized and gave some (but not enough) definition to the need for more delegation to the regional level:

Delegation of authority. Everyone, of course, supports the principle of delegation of authority (except one conference visitor, who whimsically suggested that he prefers to hang on to the power to make the mistakes rather than give it to the field because it's more fun for him that way), but it was apparent that none of the regional directors felt they had been granted enough authority by their Washington offices. Notwithstanding, discussion at the conference on this subject tended to be more an undifferentiated catalog of gripes than an orderly plan for action.

The regional councils should provide a vehicle for forcing regional directors to get specific in requesting delegations from their Washington agencies. There was common agreement that collaboration among regional directors will be a pretty nebulous business until, among other things, they are peers in the sense that they have something nearer to like powers on the basis of which they can make parallel commitments and indulge in tradeoffs.

Special problems of the Manpower Administration. The Manpower Administration (of the Department of Labor) is probably least prepared to participate in the kind of interagency collaboration proposed because the regional manpower administrators are typically newer on the job, have fewer specific powers, are masters of a smaller slice of the resources of their department, and finally are more impoverished staffwise than any of the other regional directors. A major effort must be made to strengthen the regional manpower administrators if they are to be anything like equals in the marketplace for urban ghetto programs. This view was widely shared by the regional directors of other agencies.

Special problems of HEW participation. To a man the HEW regional directors agreed that the word "director" in their title was something of a euphemism. They all felt that too often they stood in relation to the regional people from OE (Office of Education) and<sup>5</sup> PHS (Public Health Service), for example, as unwelcome intruders.

The conference highlighted and clarified several other miscellaneous factors. (a) Interagency collaboration would require that regional directors be given additional generalist staff capable of looking at problems of ghettos and the cities, rather than just health, education, jobs, housing, or any other specialized program. It was assumed that some missionary work by OEM with the Civil Service Commission may also be needed, because the Commission has taken a dim view of the legitimacy of generalist positions. (b) Regional directors had stressed the need for "glue money," funds which are not categorical and which therefore can be used to fill the gaps between categorical programs from one agency to another. (c) The irregular pattern of regional boundaries was identified as a major obstruction to interagency coordination. In three of the regions at the conference there were five states in common, but the New York regional directors had in common only the State of New York.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

(d) Finally, the side discussions, especially, revealed the conflict of interests and apathy which mitigated against collaboration among regional directors:

Regional administrators support programs that serve groups, some of which are antagonistic to one another. Furthermore, the constituent elements of the different agencies are fostering programs that compete for the same clientele.

Regional administrators are getting mixed signals from Washington about interagency emphases. Greatly increased grant appropriations and more complicated legislative guidance with no increase in field personnel have required that one work harder to do one's own thing. From certain heights, there are demands to participate in Model Cities, CAMPS, NSP, CEP, and other interagency efforts; but from other peaks, there are sotto voce qualifiers "but not in ways that subordinate our mandate to theirs."

Regional administrators have experienced some unpleasant consequences from their participation in interagency effort. Constituent elements of their departments or Washington superiors have been reluctant or even unwilling to support commitments to interagency efforts which regional administrators have made. Funds tend to get committed for traditional single agency efforts without consideration of multi-agency projects. Prescribed responsibilities burden constituent element staffs to the point where they are only minimally available for interagency efforts. The always inadequate travel funds are unavailable for interagency activities. Positions focused on interagency functions are most susceptible to pruning.

Different constituencies, both internal and external, different programs and different guidance lead to different objectives. The constituent elements under the regional administrators often set regional office objectives.<sup>6</sup>

Areas of Agreement about Proceeding. The above conclusions were implicit in the conference discussions -- in- and outside of the regular meetings. They were summarized by OEM staff immediately after the conference. Also, the conference reached common agreement on the following:

1. To establish 4 regional councils. (Atlanta preferred not to attach a title to its group.)
2. To accept assistance from OEM on terms to be agreed to between each region and OEM. However, in effect there was at least tentative acceptance of the several roles for OEM--as secretariat to the under secretary group and JAFT, as liaison between the field and Washington, and as potential staff assistance to the regional councils.
3. To request generalist staff support ranging initially from 2 to 9 positions per agency in each region, depending on the readiness of the various regions to move ahead immediately.

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<sup>6</sup>"The Regional Council Model" (35), pp. 2-3.

4. To adopt as the consensus of the conference the recommendations of the Chicago region. (The consensus was not intended to reflect word-by-word agreement but rather a general field position.)
5. To hold a follow-up conference in early December to compare progress in each of the regions.

Thus at the start of the conference the regional directors had been duly skeptical that any useful purpose would be served by the meeting: "however," according to the OEM, "two days later, the overwhelming majority considered the experience to have been of considerable value in contributing to their understanding of the problems of interagency coordination, and they agree we should do a follow-up conference...to compare progress in each of the regions."

#### Follow-up Activities

The OEM staff was pleased with the outcome of the conference. Over the next several weeks they received many communications from participants who supported the regional council concept and elaborated upon or added to the list of changes that must be made in Washington to facilitate interagency collaboration at the regional level. During this period, OEM was also developing its report on the conference to be submitted to a meeting of the under secretaries on August 30.

The report reviewed the activities of Airlie House, and analyzed several of its recurring themes. While OEM staff had not had an opportunity to do the necessary staff work to make recommendations of all of the issues raised by the regional directors which appeared to need consideration, they had prepared five recommendations. The three main recommendations, along with the action of the under secretaries, will be discussed.

1. Staff for the regional council. The report to the under secretaries recommended staff for the regional councils consisting of one assistant for each regional director for regional council matters and a staff of four to serve as a secretariat to the regional council, all positions at the level of GS 13-15. The staff secretariat would be expected to define interagency program problems, to develop alternative courses of action for council consideration, and to assure execution of council decision. The under secretaries agreed to provide in staff two stages: staff for the regional directors would be provided immediately while the secretariat for the councils would be provided only after each council had developed a work plan which justified the need for such a secretariat. Meanwhile the OEM staff would work with each regional council in development of

a work plan which then would be submitted for consideration by the under secretaries. These staff positions would be provided for on a formula of one-half from within available agency positions and the other half new slots to be made available by the Budget Bureau without regard to the strictures of current personnel limitations.

2. Upgrading regional directors. The report stated, "the range of grades among the regional directors is probably greater than it should be if the four members of the councils are, in fact, to be regarded as peers. OEO and HUD regional directors are commonly GS-17s and 18s whereas Labor and HEW regional directors are more often GS-15s and 16s....It is recommended that HEW and Labor take whatever actions are possible within existing authority." The under secretaries concurred.

3. Organizational status regional councils. The under secretaries concurred in the recommendation that regional councils should be considered to be subordinate to the under secretaries group and not in the orbit of the Federal Executive Board.

In addition, the under secretaries group requested OEM to present a formal evaluation of the OTFR and to help ensure that the councils support the coordination required in Model Cities. They agreed to meet after two months and review the work plans of the councils. They also approved the field-Washington structure which OEM had earlier proposed. This included the roles OEM had defined for itself.

One hitch soon developed. OEM had drafted a standard letter for the under secretary group to approve and then to be sent by each under secretary to his four regional directors. The Under Secretary of HUD wanted to make some minor revisions, which the group approved. He was to provide each of them with a new draft, but through an oversight there was a delay of nearly a month in the official communication about the Under Secretary's actions.

Meanwhile, OEM was supplying the field with key documents. OEM's report on Airlie House was sent out to the field directors at about the same time it was submitted to the under secretaries. The draft of the highlights of the meeting of the Under Secretaries group, August 30, was also distributed to the field. OEM staffers made visits to each city early in September. OEM effectively short circuited the time consuming Washington-field communication. However, there was a "flare up" when the Under Secretary of HUD discovered that the councils were already in business before his letter had gone out.

By late October, 1968 OEM could report progress in each of the regions. Each had set about developing work plans, meeting approximately bi-weekly. Most of the regional directors had detailed a senior staff member to work in support of council efforts. The following is illustrative of activities for the councils which OEM cited in a report outlining the regional council concept.

- (a) Pilot evaluation of integration of federal delivery systems in a key city (Chicago Regional Council proposal for Detroit).

- (b) Pilot effort to develop a strategy for dealing with cities having critical unmet needs but lacking the capability to initiate plans and requests for federal aid (New York Regional Council proposal for a small city in or near the New York City metropolitan area).
- (c) Utilize an interagency working team to identify shortcomings of existing CAMPS planning and develop specific steps which regional offices can take individually or collectively to improve CAMPS process for FY 1970 (Atlanta Regional Council).
- (d) Provide a top level forum for assigning priorities and resolving interagency issues which remain unresolved with Federal Regional Teams (NSP) and Regional Interagency Committee on Model Cities (Atlanta Regional Council).
- (e) Develop interagency training programs for supervisory and field personnel as Atlanta is starting with initial priority given to "Resident Participation" (Atlanta Regional Council).
- (f) Provide joint support for state-wide Urban Affairs Conferences designed to improve state and local government capacity to determine priorities and develop integrated programs (Atlanta Regional Council is participating with funds and staff in a pilot effort with State of Georgia in mid-November).
- (g) Conduct joint evaluation of program impact on target communities. (Atlanta Regional Council is developing project as a pilot effort with other agencies participating in evaluating a Community Action Agency.)
- (h) Develop more systematic method for exchanging management and program information among agencies. (Atlanta Regional Council has assigned an initial project to an information task force to determine sources and amounts of federal funds now being utilized by governors' offices and the functions to which these funds are applied.)
- (i) Specific proposals for delegation of supervisory and program review and sign-off authority to regional directors. (OTF report)
- (j) Clarification of departmental missions and functional areas of concern (OTF report).
- (k) Improvement of application processing and routing systems (OTF report).
- (l) Development of a pilot interagency management information system for a specific locality (OTF report).
- (m) Strengthen a city's capability to identify problems, establish priorities, review federal programs, and develop innovative proposals with a planning grant to the mayor (OTF report).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>"The Regional Council Model" (34).



OEM had assigned one staff member to work with each council. The degree of active involvement of OEM staffers in the four councils covered a wide range. In one region the OEM staff member was regarded as essential, especially during the time when the region was still building its own staff. A second region welcomed periodic consultation. A third seemed to tolerate the OEM's participation. In the fourth region, the OEM consultant was effectively excluded.

In mid-October the OEM decided to take stock of its own role and plan future activities in support of the regional councils. Although this study does not extend into the future to trace what OEM actually did, it is of interest to summarize the issues they were considering. First, it was not clear how much OEM could count on support from within the Bureau for its facilitative work. Second, there were questions about how OEM could best accelerate the maturation of the councils--by helping develop work plans, by encouraging regional directors and their newly assigned staff to schedule a two-day "retreat" with OEM serving as process facilitators, by hastening the acquisition of staff, by personally spending as much time as possible in the regional offices, "by keeping the under secretaries off the backs of the councils," by capitalizing on natural local pressure within a region that is already pushing the directors toward collaboration, by working in Washington to hasten the delegation of authority to the regions? The OEM group was working in uncharted waters and it was feeling its way.

#### Summary and Conclusions

In terms of the purpose of this volume, there are two compelling foci for an analysis of the establishment of regional councils. One possible focus is the regional council itself--how it functioned, what types of leadership evolved, what interagency work it undertook, and what results were realized. However, when the field work was conducted it was too early to make these assessments. One could only propose that the prospects for integrative federal efforts at the regional level were enhanced by the activities to date. The second focus for analysis--the one we undertake here--is the OEM. It was itself an organizational innovation and its task was to innovate in facilitating interagency integration. OEM's project to establish regional councils will be reviewed in terms of both theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter 2, but with greater emphasis placed on third-party roles.

#### Flow Model

The contextual forces which shaped the predisposition of officials regarding the cooperation among urban agencies in the NCPP (Chapter 8) were also generally present in the effort reported here. The same agencies were involved in both cases. However, the cases involved quite different types of interagency efforts. The study of the NCPP was a broad assessment of the development of the management system for conceiving and implementing a pilot program. The time period covered two years. The system was intergovernmental as well as interagency, there were fourteen separate projects requiring a sizeable resource commitment, and many significant and tough interagency decisions had been required. In contrast, the efforts to launch the regional councils

covered only several months, directly involved only about three dozen participants all from the federal bureaucracy, and the interagency decision had not involved irrevocable actions. These differences suggest that different types of design or structural elements of the effort would be salient. For example, the total funds and the relative size of the agencies' commitment of funds to the interagency effort was an important matter in the Neighborhood Centers Program but not in the Regional Council Project.

Turning to the processes involved in the interagency effort, this chapter presents a relatively detailed blow-by-blow account of interactions between OEM and the under secretaries group, between OEM and the regional directors, and among regional directors during Airlie House. The NCPP account merely summarized the patterns of such interactions. Therefore, whereas the NCPP study presented a relatively fruitful vehicle for analyzing the impact of structural factors, the regional council study is a good basis for analyzing the dynamics of interagency processes. These, too, will be analyzed within the third party framework below.

Regarding outcomes, OEM's specific objective was to create viable regional councils, but its underlying purpose was to promote integrative structures and processes at the regional level whatever form they took. During the period covered by the study, they had made a reasonably effective start. The under secretaries group had been maneuvered by OEM into a sponsoring role for the regional councils. The under secretaries group had blessed the councils, made itself available to them, allocated a senior staff position to each council in support of interagency activities, and promised secretariat staffs. The regional directors had been formed into groups to pressure for action on their organizational needs. They were meeting in earnest efforts to determine their potentiality. Still, the viability and value of the councils were yet to be demonstrated.

#### Interaction Dynamics

The interactions framework is especially useful in understanding the negotiations between HUD and BOB. The HUD official with overall responsibility for Model Cities and the Under Secretary of HUD showed reluctance to agree with OEM on the Airlie House conference. The author concluded that the reluctance stemmed less from an objective assessment of the merits of the regional council idea itself, than it did from the fact that OEM's leadership in this project was felt to be a challenge to HUD's identity as the lead agency in urban affairs area.

During Airlie House, OEO officials repeatedly asserted their anti-organization preferences; these assertions seemed to be intended to claim a particular identity that differentiated them from the other agencies as well as to influence the decisions about the way the regional council idea would take form. Only when this identity preference was acknowledged by others did some of the more outspoken OEO officials support the regional council project.

At the level of personal identities, rivalry had prevented the San Francisco directors from achieving consensus regarding the Oakland Task Force

and other steps toward integration. Interpersonal rivalry also was a problem in Atlanta; progress in that group came at Airlie House when the HUD director left the conference (for business reasons) and his deputy represented HUD in the Atlanta group. The past progress of the Chicago group appeared to have been both a cause and effect of the mutual reinforcement which marked the personal relations among the OEO, HEW and HUD directors.

### Third-Party Roles

Establishing Appropriate Role Relationships. There were two important organizational axes to which OEM had to relate itself appropriately: The interagency axis and the field-Washington axis. How did OEM staffers influence the type of motives, the degree of power, and the extent of neutrality that would be attributed to them?

Generally to other bureaucrats, the Bureau of the Budget is prestigious, attributed with competence, integrity and power. However the particular type of competence, integrity and power assigned to BOB is somewhat threatening to other agencies. The Bureau of the Budget is seen as a watchdog agency whose monitoring is accompanied by an ability to influence the allocation of resources. More recently, the Bureau also had been seen as able to influence the allocation and definition of lead agency assignments. There was even the possibility that BOB would try to claim a lead role assignment for itself, e.g., in Model Cities. Thus, other agencies preferred to carefully manage the image they presented to the Bureau--to be seen by the Bureau as effective and cooperative and to impress upon the Bureau their need for particular types of assistance.

OEM officials wanted to share in the prestige and in the competence, integrity, and power generally attributed to BOB. But the work they wanted to do--the third-party facilitation of interagency processes--required them to claim a different type of expertise (with less overtones of evaluation) and a different type of power (with control over process but with less control over the fates of agencies).

In an effort to be seen as nonthreatening, they differentiated themselves from the financial side of BOB at the outset of the conference. Regarding motives and power, OEM wanted to be seen as having both the desire and wherewithal to help, but not hurt the principals. OEM presented itself as possessing small but strategic staff resources which it could make available and as having access to the principals' own superiors. Over and over again OEM officials asserted their desire to help the field get what they needed to allow them to better coordinate with each other at the regional level. In the discussion the OEM directors held with the HUD director of Model Cities before the conference, they had to give him assurances that they didn't want OEM to take over the lead in program management. However, as evidence that OEM was using BOB clout, the regional directors noted that the conference had been in limbo for awhile after it was first scheduled, but nevertheless it was held.

The more relevant demonstration of OEM's influence came in the ability of OEM to (a) arrange important hearings for the OTF report; (b) obtain extra staff assistance for regional directors as a singular exception to a general

freeze on personnel budgets; (c) secure action upgrading the regional directors of HEW and Labor in order to put them on a par with the other directors; and (d) provide timely information regarding OEM's reports to the Under Secretaries group and the latter's actions. In addition, OEM helped the regional officials record their diagnosis of the constraints on interagency work and laid this record before the under secretaries group in a forceful and candid way.

How did OEM handle the question of neutrality? On the interagency dimension, OEM tried to preserve its neutrality. There was considerable tension between BOB and HUD officials both before and after Airlie House. HUD was a participant in the tension-laden interchanges with BOB because of its role as convener of the under secretaries' group, but this tension didn't generalize to other aspects of OEM's work with the regions themselves.

During Airlie House, OEM did find itself more in disagreement with OEO than the other agencies. The fact is that the OEM staff did have some ideas of their own. The BOB proposed the development of regional councils for each of the four regions. OEO directors, especially, questioned the creation of a structure as a starting point. What was the effect of OEM's proposal? It tended to encourage many participants to assume that BOB was really wedded to that particular step toward more coordination, so it may have produced expressions of resistance and opposition to a formal structure which were unnecessary. (But BOB really started to play down regional councils only after these repeated expressions.) On the other hand, because BOB members subsequently showed that they could accept the regions at whatever point they were and avoided invidious comparisons--they created neither heroes nor scapegoats--the group could draw their own conclusions from the reports of the other regional groups.

A related problem was OEM's relations to the OTF report at the outset. OEM had used the report as a major reason for convening the conference. On the one hand, the OEM conference leader became too closely identified with the OTF report by inadvertently referring to it as "the bible" for the conference. This elicited many remarks attacking the validity and universality of the report's recommendations. Also, this remark probably was one factor which encouraged participants to persist in attributing to the OEM directors stronger commitment to a regional council structure per se than these men actually felt. On the other hand, OEM may have most disappointed the OTF principals, by not devoting more direct attention to the report.

OEM's handling of two types of requests from the Under Secretary of HUD also reflects OEM's intention to preserve their own interagency neutrality and the interagency balance of the regional councils. The under secretary requested OEM to evaluate the OTF report for the under secretaries' group. Although OEM eventually did comply with the request, it appeared to delay as long as it could as if the OEM directors wanted (a) to avoid the evaluative role in general, and (b) to avoid becoming embroiled in the emotionally laden controversies among agencies in the San Francisco region.

OEM also declined to promote the close and special linkage between the regional councils and the Model Cities program which HUD/Washington officials requested. These HUD officials urged and needed more regional support for Model

Cities; but for OEM to give this special attention would provide unique focus on a program in which the HUD regional director would have the lead role and would provide a prop to him as the key man on the council. OEM continued to regard Model Cities as just one of many areas of concern for the councils, OEM officials apparently realized that councils would not be viable unless each was allowed to create its own agenda and unless the councils developed agendas that were balanced in terms of projects and programs of special interest to individual agencies. Similarly, OEM avoided trying to develop a standard solution for providing leadership or chairmanship in the regional councils. Effective leadership was provided by different agencies in different regions.

The field-Washington dimension was marked by tension, and with respect to this, OEM made less effort to preserve a neutral role. It was clear to this observer that OEM was identifying more with the regional officials than with the Washington officials. OEM articulated the grievances of the regional directors and supported their demands for more authority. Thus, OEM helped offset the inherent power disadvantage of regional directors in their relations with their under secretaries.

Illustrative of the concern with which they tried to maintain the trust of regional directors, was the response of the four OEM staff officials when it was suggested that they appear at the October meeting of the under secretaries' group and personally report on the status of each of the four regional councils. They feared that they might compromise OEM's consultative relationship with the regional council if they happened to disclose information which the regional directors themselves would have chosen not to disclose. While this reporting role could enhance the status of the OEM staff person, it could reduce the regional director's candor in the future. Eventually, the OEM staffers decided to ask the regional councils to instruct them on what should be reported. The care with which this matter was handled contrasts with OEM's practice of communicating to regional councils the under secretaries' actions even at the stage of draft reports.

Strategies. Many strategical aspects of OEM's efforts to establish regional councils have been discussed in various places above and need only be reviewed here:

First, we have just pointed out that OEM was able to use BOB auspices to advantage and yet approach the type of role relationship (in terms of power, motives, neutrality) suitable for its work.

Second, OEM officials negotiated a field-Washington structure in which--as secretariat--they were an important communication link between the regional groups and the under secretaries group and, further, they were able to influence the phrasing and timing of communications emanating from both ends of this relationship.

Third, OEM employed the two-day conference to unfreeze negative attitudes of participants, develop a persuasive diagnosis of interagency relations at the regional level, and get general agreement among the 16 regional participants for next steps.

Fourth, OEM was able to reinforce the guarded optimism produced by Airlie House by getting prompt action from the under secretaries group on a couple of the key constraints to interagency collaboration identified by the regional directors.

Tactics. The account of Airlie House not only described OEM's activities, but also analyzed many of them as third-party tactics. Thus, we tried to understand the tactical significance of OEM's (a) conceptualization, (b) presentation of a preliminary inventory of "pluses" and "minuses" for interagency collaboration, and (c) prediction that if regions didn't take initiative, then the under secretaries would probably impose something. We noted that (in this observer's opinion) these tactics were skillfully conceived, but did not realize their potential because of poor timing: they occurred before much dialogue had transpired among participants and they were delivered as a package in a speech rather than inserted in a way that was tailored to the immediate content and dynamics of the session. Also, we observed that the arrangement whereby one session was co-chaired proved to be a disadvantage when the chair needed to make an on-the-spot decision about appropriate agenda and groupings.

The general point is that the effectiveness of the conference (in its strategic role of attitude change, diagnosis, and securing agreement for next steps) is greatly dependent upon its tactical implementation. Group dynamics often present organizers, chairmen, and participants with disappointments. Many conferences fall flat, for example, because they either don't allow for enough or allow for too much emotional discharge. The tactics of a skillful facilitator in a group context involves knowing when to provide new input, when to allow conflicts to surface and when to cut them off, when to ask for commitment and when to protect ambiguity, how and when to regroup participants, and so on. Below we discuss several tactical issues in more detail.

The Regional Composition of the Conference. The fact that there were four different regional groups was at the same time a liability and an asset (and more the latter, fortunately).

First, OEM's efforts in the Airlie House Conference suffered from the fact that it was trying to simultaneously facilitate interagency relations in four regional systems which are very different in character--at different points, with different needs and concerns and attitudes toward OEM. Although it was totally fortuitous, the four regions' attributes also made very interesting and complementary contributions to the Airlie House stage of this change effort. Atlanta had served as a site for OEM to get intimately acquainted with a regional group and to try a soft-sell strategy of "show and tell." The San Francisco group had contributed the OTF report which was the official occasion for the conference and was a satisfactory background substantive document to promote relevant discussion. Chicago provided an excellent example of a collaborative interagency group; a model for the others. Finally, it was important to OEM's confirmation of its own usefulness to have the New York group express such high dependence on OEM to provide counsel and assistance.

Second, having four regional groups meet simultaneously helped indicate without active interventions by anyone which aspects of a regional director's stance toward interagency collaboration were largely determined by his institutional role and which were influenced more by his own personal style. When there were institutional factors limiting a director's action, he could feel support from the presence and verbal assistance of his agency colleagues. When the individual's view was not shared by all of his agency colleagues, he could be induced to review his own style. Also, he could learn of these differences indirectly, by listening to his agency colleagues describe their involvement in interagency activities rather than by being confronted with alleged deficiencies on his part.

Third, the juxtaposition of these four regional groups created some healthy rivalry among them; e.g., the Labor-Chicago official asserted that Chicago was the most important region as a way of increasing and signalling the regional solidarity he was feeling. Representatives from both New York and San Francisco challenged his assertion and numbered the large cities in their respective regions.

Fourth, the composition of the conference allowed for several regional directors from the same agency to meet by themselves and in some instances with their agency superiors to promote internal agency changes. The experience tended to increase the assertiveness on part of field in dealing with Washington. For example, when OEM talked with them in San Francisco, several directors were defensive, and worried about whether to take some risks with Washington. At Airlie House they became more positive.

Providing an Optimum Level of Input from Outside. The conference as planned provided for too much stimulation: keynote by an under secretary, introductory remarks and orientation by the OEM directors, and the several panel discussions by the three consultants scheduled for late Wednesday morning, by the Model Cities committee for late Wednesday afternoon, and by the under secretaries Wednesday evening. Only the consultants' input could be (and was) scratched without repercussions. As noted above, the other two panels not only took time and energy that could have been used by the participants engaging each other, but added to the tension level and were discouraging factors relative to the theme of the conference.

Surfacing and Managing the Conference Process Issues. How did OEM manage the process issues that developed during the Airlie House Conference? It's ironic that on the one hand, San Francisco officials (a subgroup of the contingent) could not get support for their several OTF report recommendations when they so explicitly asked for such support; and that on the other hand, the Chicago group received virtually unanimous acclaim for their dozen recommendations which they only submitted to the other members of the conference as if they were merely for information purposes. Why were the interested San Francisco officials so notably unsuccessful in influencing the conference? Perhaps in part it was because the report was so controversial within the San Francisco group and in part because they had already had their "air time" with Washington even before the conference started and there was determination on the part of other regions not to let them monopolize the conference. For their part, the authors of the Oakland Task Force

report were repeatedly disappointed; they had been billed in advance as the stars of the show and yet it was difficult for them to tell their story, to say nothing of achieving a direct discussion of their recommendations. As it turned out, their report had served as an important stimulus to, and pre-text for the conference, but it didn't represent the most productive agenda for the other regions. Thus, those involved in the OTF report may have felt used. Their anger might discourage them somewhat from relying upon OEM as a facilitator in the future and from participating in similar inter-region exchanges. The OEM conference leaders probably could have minimized the OTF's disappointment if they had explicitly recognized and sympathized with that group's expectations, and described the dilemmas posed by the needs of the other three groups, especially Atlanta and New York. Perhaps the OEM officials in fact did have a side conversation to this very point. From the very first evening they were aware of the problem of managing or coping with the OTF's violated expectations. They might have surfaced the issue in a conference session. One promising opportunity occurred Thursday morning. When the OEM chairman informed the conference they would meet with Atlanta and New York, they dismissed the other two groups. The Chicago group might well have been willing to meet with the San Francisco group and react to the OTF proposals as well as vice versa. Had the OTF's needs and the fact that the conference was not meeting them been surfaced in the total group, this pairing of the two groups might have been raised and acted on in the group. A more general point is that the OEM officials did relatively little of this type of "process" analysis.

In contrast with the above pattern, the OEM officials who opened the Thursday morning did talk personally and directly to the discouragement created by the Model Cities group and the under secretaries the previous day. In the opinion of this observer, his candor greatly facilitated the work which was accomplished on Thursday.

Similarly, one of the behavioral science consultants also made several observations about group process, usually with the effect of stimulating some energetic discussion on the point, although for some reason these self-analytical processes quickly petered out.

Stance regarding Intra-regional Conflicts. Manifest conflicts within at least two of the regions threatened to effectively nullify all of the other efforts to establish regional councils. OEM officials continued (before and after Airlie House) to fret about the conflict between two regional directors in Atlanta, and yet they did not undertake to work directly on this relationship. Why not? Was it within their role conception as they viewed it? Did they believe it would be within their role conception as viewed by the principals? Did they have the skills to work on the facilitation of inter-personal relations as contrasted with interagency relations? (They assumed that there was a high proportion of personal rivalry in the Atlanta conflict.) Perhaps the answers to all of the above were "yes," and they simply believed that thus far an intervention would have more risks than gains. It is significant that OEM tried to convene the directors in the San Francisco region to review the report as a group, but were unable to pull this off. Also, they continued to have trouble getting intimately involved with this group after Airlie House--probably because of the deep conflicts between some participants. Ironically, OEM was not being allowed to participate in the face-to-face meetings in that region where it might have made some key process interventions to work through interpersonal antagonism.



PART III

214-a

## CHAPTER 10

### ANTECEDENTS TO CONFLICT, AVOIDANCE AND INTEGRATION

In this and the chapter which follows we review aspects of the seven studies in terms of our theoretical constructs.\* Our purpose is both to contribute to a systematic comprehension of the phenomena studied and to derive some implications for effective management of interagency efforts.

The flow model presented in Chapter 2 contained the general proposition that some relatively enduring factors in the interagency context would tend to promote other conflictful or integrative process. The studies enable us to develop more specific hypotheses: Six types of contextual forces embracing some 19 factors are hypothesized to affect the integrative tendencies in interagency communities. The studies suggest that the general proposition should be elaborated in another respect. Instead of these contextual forces affecting behavior on simple spectrum of conflict to integration as we had visualized at the outset of this study, they are more appropriately conceived as vectors in a two-dimensional field in which both conflict and avoidance are alternatives to integrative processes.

A second general proposition of the flow model was that the strength of conflictful or integrative tendencies would be a function of particular features designed or structured into the interagency effort. The studies provide a basis for hypothesizing some of the features which are antecedents to conflict, avoidance or integration. By comparing the influence of eight structural features in the industrial and interagency settings, we are able to hypothesize how the interaction of contextual factors and a structural feature create tendencies toward conflict or integration.

#### Interagency Context

##### Incentives for Collaborative Interdependence

There is a general recognition that the U.S. goals were being only moderately achieved, if at all, with respect to both our policies regarding underdeveloped countries and our deteriorating cities and the deprived minorities who dwell within them. The activities which were means to achieve these goals were designed and implemented by many separate organizations. Sometimes, the activities of two agencies nullified each other. Typically, these activities failed to reinforce each other. The programs of two agencies were almost never directly compared for their relative effectiveness in achieving the same objectives in order to work toward a more optimum allocation of resources among agencies. It has been postulated by many would-be reformers of the federal bureaucracy that if there were more coherence in the federal government's activities in the urban affairs community (and similarly in foreign affairs), this would increase the effectiveness of most

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\* Some of the material in this chapter is drawn from an earlier report of this research program--Special Technical Report #3, dated June, 1969.

individual agencies and the collective impact on the community. Increased coherence could be enhanced in any or all of a variety of areas:

1. Interagency exchange of information regarding respective goals, assessments, programs, implementing techniques and contacts with the host country (in foreign affairs) and the cities or states (in urban affairs).
2. Interagency policy influence: agencies explore their respective policies for inconsistencies and allow for mutual influence.
3. Policy-program consistency: for example, in foreign affairs, AID and Military dollar programs were major instruments of foreign policy while state supposedly fashioned and articulated policy. Therefore consistency would only result from collaboration between those responsible for program documents and those responsible for policy documents.
4. Comprehensive multi-agency policy planning and program planning.
5. Interagency program collaboration; i.e., programs which require either joint or interdependent implementation.
6. Optimum allocation of resources among agencies.
7. Joint reliance upon common resources, administrative machinery, extra-federal liaison, etc.

That the need of increased interagency integration existed did not insure that there would be a substantial effort to achieve it. Agency officials who initiate or actively cooperate with efforts to integrate the foreign affairs or urban affairs communities appear to be responding to one or more of four basic incentives.

Commitment to Superordinate Goals. Agency representatives share a basic commitment to larger U.S. goals. For example, most are responsive to the inherent merit of a coordinated foreign affairs effort. They do accept that their own programs should relate to larger U.S. goals. Thus, most intrinsic motivation is provided when an official has a strong and active commitment to U.S. goals that are broader than his own agency's mandate. In recent years bureaucrats have experienced a growing awareness of our failures and an increasing sense of urgency in the situation. These factors have increased the predisposition for interagency collaboration, but unfortunately at a rate that would appear to be slower than the need for it.

This type of motivation was a dominant one in the case of certain individual participants in NCPP, Topsy, the CASP cycle, and the regional councils, but it did not generally characterize the attitudes of the participating bureaucrats.

Deference to Authority of President or his Delegate. The President is the superior to whom all of these agencies and their personnel are ultimately responsible. If the President has associated himself with a particular interagency effort or has delegated some of his interagency authority to

a specific position (such as the ambassador) or an agency (e.g., HUD in the case of the NCPP), then the officials of other agencies feel more compulsion to comply with the relevant interagency requests. The President's interest in the NCPP was the decisive factor for some agency participants and for some agency contributions to that interagency effort. The same point can be made with respect to much of the participation in the CASP cycle and the policy-planning group participants were responding to the delegated authority held by particular officials of the Department of State. Other agencies were somewhat accepting of the State Department's interagency initiatives, because State had been designated to lead agency in foreign affairs; a role also supported by tradition. Over the past decade the presidents, with increasing frequency, have identified their office with programs, exercises, and councils of an interagency nature and have delegated some interagency authority to lead agencies.

Anticipated Reciprocal Benefit. Apart from a direct concern with super-ordinate goals, an official may recognize that just as he has information or technical expertise which a counterpart in another agency needs, that counterpart may be able to help him--by a program concession, by facilitating a contact with a city or a host country official, etc. One reason that agency representatives may value the opportunity for reciprocal influence and information exchange is that they get information on a more personal basis which also allows them to obtain nuance as well as basic content.

Desire to Learn From and Influence Other Agencies. For some officials the opportunity to have exchanges with officials in other agencies working on related goals serves some significant professional and/or personal desires. These are opportunities to both learn (be influenced) and influence others. For example, agency representatives often enjoy contact with others who have similar geographic interests.

These last two incentives were largely responsible for participation in BIG and were factors in the regional councils and in some interagency groups within NCPP.

#### Incentives for Conflict and Avoidance

An absence of collaboration in the interagency network does not imply the presence of conflict, a fact which differentiates the interorganizational networks studied here from interdepartmental relationships within a single organization. Within a business organization, for example, the salient theoretical and practical questions usually focus on the proportion of cooperation to conflict between departments that are functionally interdependent. Their interdependence, which is ~~taken~~ for granted, is usually required by the flow of product. In contrast, in the interagency networks, to a much greater degree one is looking for collaboration among agency organizations that are currently relatively independent in their functioning. To a very large extent, each agency has its own goals and its own resources to perform adequately without relating itself to other agencies.

Independence (avoidance) is frequently a viable alternative in the interagency systems referred to here because of the type of interdependent potential among the federal agencies involved. First, in both the foreign affairs

and urban fields, agencies' goals are often interdependent only in the long run. For example, if education and health of a population must be improved before unemployment patterns can be altered in a stable way, then the goal achievement of the Labor Department depends in part upon the success of HEW. However, understanding this longer-run interdependence does not appear to provide a compelling reason for interacting today.

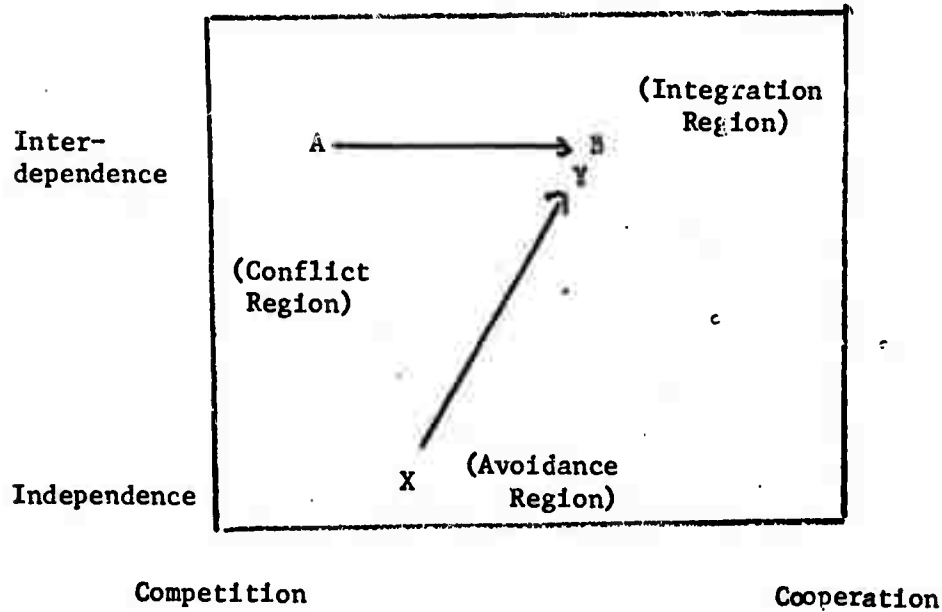
Second, while considerably integrative potential exists among instrumental activities of agencies in the field, there usually is no meaningful requirement to integrate or coordinate them. For example, the activities of several agencies in the urban field are potentially interdependent in the sense that they could (a) eliminate duplicated administrative machinery and individually achieve their stated goals to a greater degree; (b) jointly gather and exchange information that would enable each to plan better; (c) simplify the federal government liaison with other governmental units such as city governments, allowing for more integrative planning within these other units; (d) combine complementary types of expertise, e.g., in functional programs, in orientation toward citizen and institutional clientele, in contacts with different levels of government--making possible more comprehensive approaches to the solution of urban ills. However, despite the integrative potential, there usually are few, if any, absolute costs associated with a failure to problem solve or bargain, (apart from the disapproval of bureaucratic superiors, a disapproval that is frequently more apparent than real). Failure to cooperate only involves opportunity costs, not regression from the status quo.

The fact that where interdependencies exist they represent opportunities to improve the agencies' effectiveness, but are not absolutely essential to the basic performance of the agencies' programs, is important because it explains why any level of coordination might be regarded as satisfactory so long as there is not manifest conflict among agencies. An opportunity to collaborate foregone is quite different than a failure to fulfill an essential coordinative act: the former can be easily overlooked; the latter demands attention. Thus, increases in interagency integration when they occur can replace either conflictful modes or patterns of independent operation and typically both to some extent. Figure 10.1 shows the field of possibilities represented by the dimensions of independence-interdependence and competitive-cooperative, and the two arrows on this field show the typical change problems focal to the intraorganizational relations ( $A \rightarrow B$ ) and interagency relations ( $X \rightarrow Y$ ), respectively

Although one can differentiate conceptually between forces toward conflict and toward avoidance, they frequently represent two possible implications of the same environmental factor. Below we discuss five groups of factors: competitive incentives, antagonistic stimuli, threats to agency autonomy and identity, overload conditions and barriers to synchronization. The effect of the first of the five groups is to promote conflict as a primary response and avoidance as a secondary and defensive mode. The effect of the last of the five groups--barriers to synchronization--is primarily avoidance and secondarily conflict. The other three provide relatively balanced incentives for both conflict and avoidance. We will discuss the dual implications of these contextual factors as we illustrate each of them in turn.

Competitive Incentives. Agencies in the same general community are competitive with each other with respect to a number of issues.

Figure 10.1



A → B indicates type of change which is focal for theory and managerial practice regarding interdepartmental relations within organizations

X → Y indicates type of change which is focal for interorganizational relations, including the interagency community

1. Conflict in goals, values, ideologies, or philosophies is the most fundamental source of competition. The many federal departments operating in the domestic and foreign affairs areas represent more than just functionally differentiated tasks; they represent many unique ideologies and values. For example, consider the value differences among several foreign affairs agencies concerned with rural community development. In working with elements of the local community, the Military Assistance Group favored a strategy of influence based on high coercive power and low trust. The AID favored a strategy employing high reward power. The Peace Corps pursued a philosophy of influence and change which involved high trust, low power, no extrinsic rewards and which relied upon expertise and personal example. Similarly, fundamental philosophical differences exist between OEO and HUD and Department of Labor in the domestic field. Whereas OEO placed highest priority on the citizen involvement goals in the NCPP, HUD and other participating agencies valued that goal secondary to achieving a more integrated system for delivering social services to neighborhood residents.

2. There is competition among agencies for status recognition and power in the interagency network. On one front, State and the Defense Department compete for dominance in foreign affairs. In the representational and influence processes between the U.S. mission and the host government the AID and State Department organizations sometimes compete for preeminence. Another competition exists between AID and Peace Corps for recognition as the leader in the humanitarian side of our foreign affairs effort. When they were studied, OEO and HUD especially were making rival claims to leadership in urban affairs. However, Labor, HEW, HUD, and OEO were all competitive with one or more of the others in some program areas.

In both foreign and urban affairs communities, feelings of rivalry were heightened where two agencies had similar programs, including similar goals. Thus, just as conflict sometimes arose because of sharp differences--goal conflict--it sometimes occurred as a result of the similarities.

3. Related to the issues of rivalry over status is the conflict over financial resources. Agencies fear that either as a result of cost effectiveness or trade-off analysis or as a consequence of poor public and congressional relations, they will lose appropriations to another agency.

Antagonistic Stimuli. A variety of negative perceptions and resentments create tension between officials of different agencies in the same community.

1. Stereotypes and parochialism. Where each group has its unique history, its own particular legitimating rationale and philosophy, its own style of operating, it is not surprising that stereotypes of agencies and their personnel have developed. For example, the following stereotypes were frequently encountered: OEO officials are irresponsible, revolutionary, and devious; Labor personnel are old-fashioned and limited in conceptual capacity; AID officials are the classic Ugly Americans; Military men, when in doubt, always want to resort to force; and so on. The holders of such stereotypes usually want to avoid contact with officials of the agency in question and, once in contact, tend to treat them according to their stereotype; and it is not surprising that this promotes conflict.

2. Invidious comparisons at the individual level. Each agency has its own problem of attracting, retaining and motivating competent people in its organization. And each agency has attempted to solve this problem with its own unique set of inducements--pay, allowances, privileges, status symbols and working conditions. Not surprisingly, many situations result which are experienced by one group or the other as incongruous--producing feelings of envy and jealousy.

In the U.S. mission in Brazil, AID officials were believed to be better rewarded and to carry more responsibility than State officials in the same age and experience brackets. State officials resented this. Similar invidious comparisons occurred between the military and other groups in the overseas mission. This type of issue was encountered only in a minor way in our studies in the urban affairs community.

The resentment is sharpest where the differentials in privileges or rewards between groups are seen as significantly incongruous with other status factors. For example, the resentment of State Department officials toward their better rewarded AID counterparts was heightened because they were members of the agency which presumably had the highest in the mission, toughest personnel selection standards and with the most tradition. Participants claimed that it was an insult to have to respond to State initiatives:

3. Agency status incongruity. Just as at the personnel level, incongruity among status factors at the institutional level can create resentment. For example, State had been designated as formal leader in foreign affairs, but it had no control over even a significant fraction of the financial resources wielded by AID and DOD, creating incongruity between legitimate leadership and informal power. State Department resented this imbalance because it limited their effective influence. AID and DOL officials often resented the deference they must show to State's formal leadership position because they knew that in reality, they managed much larger segments of the foreign affairs effort and did exercise significant effective power. Similar incongruity existed among urban agencies, e.g., when HUD--a relatively smaller and junior agency--was designated the lead role for an interagency program which involved predominantly HEW service programs.

Another type of incongruity exists when the participating agencies find the lead agency's personnel unable to provide a quality of either organizational or intellectual leadership that is better than the capacities of the participating agencies.

Threats to Agency Autonomy and Identity. Each of the agencies in the two communities studied here was keenly aware of its own unique mission, of its own particular legislative authorization, of its own constituency. Each valued its autonomy and separate identity, which could be threatened in various ways.

1. Loss of program initiative. In interagency efforts, initiative for defining an agency's programs and ordering priorities among several of its programs may shift to another agency or to an interagency group. For example, the Peace Corps in Brazil placed highest priority on basic community development work, but under pressure from AID and the Ambassador they entered into programs to eliminate production bottlenecks. In NCPP, HEW and DOL had to modify their own prior programming strategies to fit the neighborhood center concept.



2. Loss of identity of agency and/or programs. Collaborative programs create the fear that an agency's program contribution won't be recognized. This fear creates a tendency to avoid collaborative programs; once agencies are into a joint program, whether as a result of negotiation or a "shotgun wedding," this fear leads to conflict and maneuvering to ensure credit. In the collaborative Peace Corps and AID programs, each wanted the projects identified with its name. In the NCPP there was considerable tension regarding whether OEO's neighborhood corporation demonstration program (after it was merged into the NCPP demonstration program) was dominating the NCPP in the seven cities where it was operative or was being submerged by the NCPP.

Interagency councils and exercises can elicit another type of fear, namely that mere participation will contaminate an agency's image. In the foreign affairs community, the Peace Corps prefers to be dissociated from other agencies, especially the military and intelligence agencies. In the domestic arena, many OEO officials believed they diluted their own image and acceptability to the ghetto by their association with DOL toward which there often was great animosity.

3. Unwanted visibility. With contact and interdependences goes exposure and vulnerability. One is not only more susceptible to friendly persuasion to reorder one's priorities or to make some concession, but one is more vulnerable to public criticism and formal controls. Dramatic examples are provided by the scandals involving massive waste or incompetence in AID programs and the congressional reactions to discoveries that Blacks with "criminal records" provided the local leadership for OEO programs. In the NCPP, the various participating agencies were variously criticized for incompetence, self-serving behavior, and being hopelessly bound by red tape. There are understandable fears that either additional controls will be imposed or that funds will be reallocated among agencies--as a result of the visibility.

4. Amalgamation. Amalgamation of an agency or parts of an agency with one or more others is the ultimate form of the threat of loss of program initiative, loss of identity, and visibility accompanied by control. This is, of course, how the giant department of Health, Education and Welfare and the new Department of Housing and Urban Development had been created. During the period in which the field work in the urban affairs community was conducted, there was active concern about the prospect of OEO programs and their personnel being transferred to HEW and Labor. As another example, the part of the AID organization responsible for managing the AID programs in Latin America had been brought into the Latin American bureau of the State Department. Once amalgamation of these kinds has occurred, but has not erased the earlier agency identity, the personnel still resist the redistribution of duties and other steps of complete integration.

Overload Conditions. There are a variety of factors which discourage interagency collaboration not because they directly promote a competitive orientation or present a threat to agency autonomy or its identity, but rather because they complicate life for the bureaucrats involved.

1. Conceptual overload. When an agency official participates in some interagency effort, in theory he is usually expected not only to contribute his special expertise, but also to assimilate the knowledge contributed by other agencies and further to help develop assessments, policies, plans and

programs that synthesize the separate agency interest, views, competencies and resources. This is essentially a generalist role and few officials below the secretarial levels can operate as competent generalists when the situation really calls for it. This was clearly manifested in the policy-planning working group, in the CASP exercise, and in the NCPP. In the NCPP many members of the Federal Regional Teams refused to participate as generalists, when that was the orientation obviously expected of the teams. One could almost observe the increased sense of inadequacy on the part of agency officials when the problems of an underdeveloped country or a ghetto neighborhood were approached as an interrelated set of economic-social-political problems. The frustration between expectations and capacities led to tension, conflict and withdrawal.

2. Strangulation by red tape and meetings. Compared with unilateral agency efforts, interagency efforts take more bureaucratic time. Bureaucratic time is enormous because of different geographical locations of agency offices and liaison positions which are not comparable from agency to agency. In an interagency venture, often a second agency's red tape is merely layered on the first's. The combined areas of cautions of two agencies preclude more alternatives than the areas of caution of one agency. Actions have to be cleared through two agencies rather than one. Moreover, more types of actions have to be cleared by the implementor in an interagency program than is the case of normal agency programs. The general point is that two sets of constraints are more cumbersome than one. The meetings and written reports are often the types of work activities required by the interagency council or exercise, and the type of agency official who is involved is often one who already spends an enormous amount of time in these activities. He resists more of the same. It is also typical that interagency programs are undermanned. Because other regular business is continued, a person may take on additional interagency without dropping any other duties. For example, in the NCPP, Labor's overload condition is this field organization made their people especially unresponsive to and antagonistic toward this interagency program.

3. Failure-impotency psychology. The likelihood of failure often looms so large that it overwhelms any positive interest in the interagency effort. In part as a response to the many factors discussed above as well as in light of past experience, agency officials are typically pessimistic about the success of interagency efforts in which they have been asked to participate. Even if an official believed in the need for the comprehensive program planning and contemplated in the CASP cycle, probably he would doubt either that good documents could be produced and if produced that they would be used. There is a self-fulfilling prophesy dynamic involved in the immediate interagency effort. If they doubt the success, they tend to avoid or at least invest minimally in an effort with little or no chance of succeeding.

Barriers to Synchronization. There are many asymmetries between agencies which tend to prevent them from synchronizing their efforts.

1. Different geographic jurisdictions. The four urban affairs agencies HUD, OEO, HEW, and Labor each had different numbers of regions and different region boundaries. This presented a major practical obstacle to effective coordination in the NCPP. The creation of regional councils was initiated in four cases where regional headquarters were all co-located in the same city--Chicago, Atlanta, New York City, and San Francisco. This is less of a problem in foreign affairs, particularly in the field organization which

is so heavily focused on the country. But the military, for example, has regional organizations not matched by other agencies, and these create some confusion. In the Washington organizations of the foreign affairs communities, some follow geographic lines, and others emphasize functional divisions.

2. Asymmetries in agencies' participation. One problem is that groups composed of representatives from many agencies typically involve the following disparities: (a) some have more to gain and/or more to lose by decisions or actions of the group; (b) some have more authority to speak for their group than others; (c) some have higher rank than others; (d) some have broader goals that include the purposes of many other agencies, while others have narrow specific, limited goals; (e) some are newer, less legitimate than others; (f) some are more aggressive, risk-taking.

These disparities and asymmetries lead to the following tendencies: (a) differential interest in meetings and different amounts of available energy (differences which are responsible for many group process issues); (b) preferences for the authority of the group; (c) bilateral negotiations outside multi-agency groups.

If the motivation of one agency is high and the other low, this will be reflected in differences over how often to meet, how thoroughly to discuss matters, etc. These differences make it difficult to synchronize their efforts. If the representative of one agency has high authority to commit his agency and another low, this creates impatience and antagonism toward another person who can't act. These and other asymmetries in the NCPP management system inhibited serious engagement and created conflict in the inter-agency process.

### Summary

The directional tendencies toward conflict, avoidance and integration hypothesized to result from each of these many contextual forces are depicted as vectors in summary Figure 10.2.

### Some Structural Features of Interagency Projects

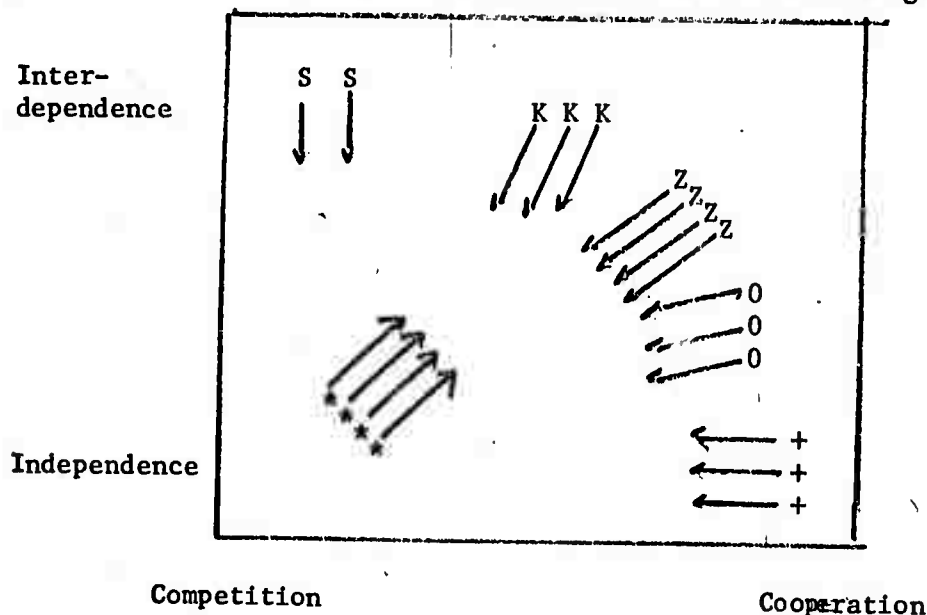
Behavior in interagency settings is not just a function of contextual forces. The way that the integrative project, exercise or council is structured is important, too. "Structure" refers to a large array of factors--authority, division of labor, reward system, personnel composition, information system, and others.

The approach of this section is to show how behavior (in particular, conflict management behavior) is a function of the combination or interaction of various structural elements of the project (or exercise or council) and contextual forces in the environment.

In order to sharpen our understanding of the special organizational problems which arise in the interagency settings, we will contrast them with those typically experienced in connection with a relevant management device used in industry. The device is referred to as "project management."

Figure 10.2.

Field of Vectors Affecting Integrative Efforts in the Interagency Context



- \* Incentives for Collaborative Interdependence
  - Commitment to Superordinate Goals
  - Deference to Authority of President or his Delegate
  - Anticipated Reciprocal Benefit
  - Desire to Learn and Influence Other Agencies
- + Competitive Incentives
  - Conflict in Goals, Values
  - Competition for Status, Power
  - Competition for Resources
- 0 Antagonistic Stimuli
  - Stereotypes
  - Invidious Comparisons
  - Agency Status Incongruity
- Z Threats to Agency Autonomy and Identity
  - Loss of Program Initiative
  - Loss of Identity of Agency and/or Programs
  - Unwanted Visibility
  - Amalgamation
- K Overload Conditions
  - Conceptual Overload
  - Strangulation by Red Tape and Meetings
  - Failure--Impotency Psychology
- S Barriers to Synchronization
  - Different Geographic Jurisdiction
  - Asymmetries in Agencies' Participation

Project management methods have been used extensively in managing the large, complex undertakings of the aerospace industry. They have yielded impressive, even staggering results in both space exploration and military weaponry. Often particular projects required the skills and resources of many separate organizations. In recent years project management methods have received considerable attention among those in the federal establishment who are searching for ways to harness the federal bureaucracy. Many now ask, "Why not learn from these experiences and utilize temporary organizations to concert governmental resources in dealing with massive social problems?"

The type of project management methods contemplated here is sometimes referred to as a "matrix organization" concept.<sup>1</sup> Whereas a pure project organization involves giving full authority to the general manager and relatively independent division status to his organization, the matrix concept involves a sharing of authority between the project manager and functional managers. Under this concept, the project manager typically has initiative and authority over the design of the product, the strategy for prosecuting the work, and direct control of a limited staff temporarily assigned to help him. The line managers retain their immediate authority over most of the personnel performing work essential to the project and substantial influence over those aspects of the product design in which they have a high interest.

At least in some limited sense most of the interagency efforts reported in Part III utilized project management methods. Although the term project or program manager was used only in connection with the Neighborhood Pilot Program, other good examples of project management methods are provided by the two planning exercises and the Ambassador's task force in Operation Topsy. A brief review of three efforts in terms of the project management concept will make clearer their relevance to the analytic discussion below.

The eventual products of NCPP were to be centers in ghetto neighborhoods. The immediate products of the Program were planning documents approved and funded by the federal government. This required the integration of the resources and expertise of many federal agencies as well as the participation of state governments, city officials, neighborhood residents, and local social service agencies. There were various project groups and design tasks: First, the Washington interagency policy group had to define the operational objectiveness of the program and the guidelines for the field. Second, the Federal Regional Teams had to initiate, facilitate and approve the development of particular neighborhood center projects. The third type of project group actually designed the center and social service delivery system for the neighborhood in question. It was comprised of city officials, local poverty agency personnel, neighborhood representatives, State and federal field officials. Thus, there were three levels of project management teams.

The Policy Planning Council used project management methods to develop long-term policy documents. The senior Foreign Service Officer who chaired the planning group was, in effect, a project manager. The design task of the group required that members pool and synthesize their specialized

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<sup>1</sup> We have relied heavily upon two sources to check and supplement the author's observations of project management in the aerospace industry: Cleland and King (5), and Steiner and Ryan (19).

information, examine their diverse interests and differing policy concerns, and then in the context of some understanding of broad U.S. goals vis-à-vis nations such as Country X, develop a long-term policy statement which could be recommended ultimately to the top U.S. foreign policy makers.

Still a different type of interagency project was provided by Operation Topsy. An interagency task force of higher level Washington officials was employed to review the Ambassador's plans. The Washington team spent several weeks in the field interviewing mission personnel and deliberating among themselves leading to their recommendations regarding the level of reduction in each agency staff consistent with overall U.S. interests.

Thus, the three interagency projects reviewed above involve many different types of projects with particular products or outcomes: neighborhood service systems, planning documents and organization change. In each case there were temporary project teams or task forces with both design tasks and other coordinative responsibilities.

One difference between the interagency programs and projects treated here, and those in the aerospace industry with which the literature on project management has dealt concerns the level of coordination achieved without the project management system. In the industrial case, with or without project management, a relatively high level of integration is typically achieved and reflected in the final product, which as a technical system must function according to some preestablished performance criteria. Industrial project management is primarily a means for more efficiently achieving some given level of system integration (or improving it marginally). In contrast, in most of the interagency projects studied, the prior state was one of little or no integration of the efforts of the respective agencies. For example, the Peace Corps, AID and U.S. Military Assistance Group could indefinitely pursue independent efforts at community development in the outlying districts of a Latin American country. These independent efforts could even pursue cross purposes. Similarly, HUD and OEO might well be pursuing contradictory strategies in a given city.

The ideas presented below are most applicable to temporary project teams, but frequently they also have relevance to continuing councils with an interagency composition, such as the country team, BIG, and regional councils.

In this section, we outline structural aspects of project management and their implications for conflict, avoidance, and integration: (a) authority which does not match responsibility; (b) dual membership; (c) temporary life; (d) task uncertainties; (e) ambiguity and fluidity of structure; (f) interdependence and rewards; (g) whole products; and (h) territoriality. For each element our first reference is to experience with project management in industrial settings, especially aerospace. Then we turn to the interagency setting and draw appropriate contrasts or comparisons.

Generally the reader may anticipate the comparisons: Most of the features of project management which create conflict or avoidance in industrial settings have even stronger effects in interagency settings. The features which facilitate conflict management and integration in industrial settings have a weaker effect in interagency projects.

The greater propensity toward conflict is hypothesized to result from the interaction of the above structural features of project management with certain of the contextual factors identified earlier, including value differences, parochialism and stereotypes, bureaucratic constraints, political risks associated with visibility, failure psychology. Therefore, for each structural element, we will propose which factors in the interagency setting qualify the conflict potential and opportunities for conflict resolution typically associated with project management methods in industrial settings.

#### Authority gap

The project manager in industry has direct and complete responsibility for accomplishing the task, but limited authority over personnel, facilities, procedures and funds. He has responsibility for obtaining services of the others and achieving coordination among them, by typically insufficient authority to require the necessary performance. As Steiner and Ryan point out:

Questions of priority arise. The project manager must frequently ask the functional manager of these shared resources to employ them in a fashion that is risky in the eyes of the functional manager, who is evaluated on his use of these resources. What he considers optimum use of resources under his disposal may differ much from what the project manager wishes.<sup>2</sup>

The project managers need authority to resolve conflicts that may jeopardize achievement of project objectives. As one manager put it: "There is a natural tendency for the functional managers to standardize their operations or efforts to perform to standards, or to build a standard model. A project manager must, through his influence, force his functional areas to depart from a standard and build something that fits in with the other parts of the project. Someone has to force these people to take action when these actions increase a functional manager's risk or use his resources at a greater rate than he would otherwise. The project manager's role is to balance this risk over all portions of the project. Therefore, he must have authority to move quickly to balance his risk."<sup>3</sup>

The deficiency in the formal authority of the project manager requires that he rely upon other sources of influence. If the functional managers whose cooperation he needs are made dependent in some way upon the project manager, the latter has some bargaining power to gain cooperation which involves sacrifices of other matters of priority for the functional managers. However, typically, the manager does not have either the formal authority or bargaining power to directly resolve differences in priorities. He must elicit collaboration by building positive relationships and by gaining more general commitment to project goals. While the latter statement applies in some degree to all interdepartmental relations, it is more crucial in project management. Steiner and Ryan report:

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<sup>2</sup>Steiner and Ryan (19), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

The typical successful project manager gets things done through cooperation of others gained in many different ways. This may be a combination of forces, such as his status and respect enjoyed both within and outside his organization, his persuasive abilities, his reputation and capability in resolving opposed views, the priority of his project within an organization, his specialized knowledge, and his rank in the organization.<sup>4</sup>

Cleland and King conclude as follows:

The authors have taken the position that one of the project manager's greatest sources of authority involves the manner in which he builds alliances in his environment--with his peers, associates, superiors, subordinates, and other interested parties. The building of alliances supplements his legal authority; it is the process through which the project manager can translate disagreement and conflict into authority (or influence power) to make his decisions stand. Sometimes the power and control of the project manager represent a subtle departure from this legal authority.<sup>5</sup>

In industry, the project manager is usually given relatively direct access to top management, but his recourse to this mechanism contains two risks for him: if he wins, he may undermine his ability for establishing a positive relationship with the functional manager; if he loses, the incident may create the general impression of top management indifference, an impression which detracts from his ability to get commitment to project goals.

The above observations are based on project management in industrial settings. The tendencies described appear to be even stronger in inter-agency settings because the gap between responsibility and authority is typically larger in the case of the interagency project manager than for the aerospace project manager. Federal agencies have been extremely resistant to the idea of yielding authority to a project manager of a sister agency, in part because of the value differences among them and in part because of the bureaucratic regulations which constrain them. The effect is that innumerable differences in priorities arise between the project manager and the functional managers. Generally these conflicts are resolved at the immediate disadvantage of the project or are settled in favor of the project manager only by recourse to top management, a process which exacts its cost in terms of the project manager's relationship with the functional manager involved.

Moreover, the federal agencies have not arranged for their respective project representatives (the official who represents the agency on the inter-agency project team) to have sufficient authority to commit the agencies' resources. Thus, even if the project manager is able to build collaborative processes within the larger project team, the agency representatives often cannot deliver on their promises. In effect, this widens the authority gap.

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<sup>5</sup> Cleland and King (5), p. 239.



The authority gap for the lead agency was a significant handicap for HUD in the NCPP, requiring consensus decision procedures, which resulted in costly delays and compromises. Similarly, the Foreign Service Officer who chaired the working group for the Policy Planning Council lacked authority to influence the composition of his group--a factor with important influence on the productivity of the project. In Operation Topsy, the Ambassador was able to mobilize effective power to ensure the success of one aspect of the project, but the maneuvers required to fill the formal authority gap had other self-defeating side effects.

Interestingly, the question of authority appears to be somewhat less important in continuous councils not responsible for a specific project or program. In the case of BIG, where there were no external requirements for decisions or action, the group could contribute to integration in an indirect way with little formal authority vested in the chairman and in the agency representatives.

We have not exhausted the discussion of authority of lead agencies; it will be discussed further as it affects third-party interventions.

### Dual Membership

The personnel of a functional department assigned to the project have dual memberships, two bosses, and conflicting loyalties. The project management team must contend with contradictory expectations placed on team members and the internal conflict that results. If the team member chooses to identify strictly with the project, he may alienate the functional personnel with whom he must deal (and whose company he will subsequently rejoin). If he consistently responds to the expectations of the functional department, he weakens the effectiveness of the projects for which he has an immediate and direct responsibility; and also weakens his relations with other project members. The internal conflict created by a man's dual loyalties often gets externalized and displaced into interpersonal or intergroup settings. Thus, provisions for conflict management must assist personnel in coping with the conflict inherent in dual membership.

As stated, the problem of dual membership exists in both industrial and interagency settings, but several factors in the latter setting exacerbate the problem. First, philosophic and ideological differences among agencies magnify the usual problem of dual membership in the functional department and project team. These value conflicts make it very difficult to show high loyalty to both; therefore few try. Second, interagency projects' participants have to work within a context of interinstitutional rivalry and widely held stereotypes. Third, the agencies' representatives to interagency projects have relatively less interorganizational mobility than engineers and scientists in the aerospace industry, encouraging the former to take a parochial view of the issues at stake in the project ventures. The mobility of agency officials which does exist is typically based on bureaucratic expertise, rather than functional expertise: the market for the functional specialties of officials of the Labor Department or AID, etc. is relatively small. The stereotypes and limited mobility reinforce the tendency to emphasize the differences that arise between one's own and another organization, making dual membership more awkward.

The reasons just cited contributed to the fact that little loyalty was elicited from the members of the Policy Planning Council, most of the project teams in the NCPP and the CASP. Where dual loyalty did develop--as it did in BIG, a few of the NCPP teams, and in the Chicago regional council--the commitment to the teams is explained in terms of the consequence of philosophies of the particular membership, and in part in terms of the management of the teams (the subject of the next chapter). In the Topsy task force, physical isolation and certain stresses helped promote project team loyalty.

### Temporary Life

The limited life of a project management organization has several implications for conflict and conflict management. It means that there will be a premium on the processes of forming a group out of a collection of individuals. In permanent work groups, members can enter and leave without necessarily affecting the more enduring structure, roles, norms and culture. In a temporary group, structure, roles, norms, and culture must be evolved by the charter members of the project themselves. Moreover, instead of a group getting acquainted with one new member at a time, all charter members are new and all are getting acquainted with each other at the same time. Conflict is integral to these processes of formation. Conflict is an important part of negotiating the norms of a new work group and of establishing personal identities in new relationships. The project manager must be sensitive to these types of conflict and skilled in handling them or in providing for their management.

The temporary nature of the management system offers two advantages in handling some of the conflicts which arise. First, there is little need to worry about precedent. In a permanent system any decision regarding personnel treatment, work procedures, facility allocation, etc. must consider the long-run viability of the precedents set by the decision. The absence of that constraint in a temporary system makes some differences easier to resolve. Second, dysfunctional organizational syndromes (e.g., low morale, conflict, apathy, alienation) are easier to break and modify in temporary systems, because at any point in time the history of the syndrome is relatively limited and because it is typically easier to transfer personnel in and out of temporary jobs without significant implications for their careers. Of course, these two advantages are potential; the project manager must be able to recognize and act on them.

The above analysis of project management is applicable in both industrial and interagency settings but the latter is complicated by certain factors: interagency and parochialism heighten the problems of forming a new group inherent in the temporary system concept. Also, the flexibility which tends to accrue because precedents are of less concern in a temporary system is partly denied by the strong adherence to bureaucratic rules.

By definition, the structural element--temporariness does not apply to the continuous coordinating mechanism--the country team, BIG, and regional councils.

### Task Uncertainties

The tasks for which project management methods are utilized typically involve a large element of uncertainty. In industry, uncertainty may be largely technical:

This may be called the uncertainty of innovation (i.e., new processes must be developed, the state of the art pushed beyond today's frontier, or inventions must be produced on schedule) to distinguish it from the usual uncertainties of production.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, as the above authors report, the project manager must continuously face problems of trade-offs between time and cost, design and cost, and design and time. These trade-offs cannot be predicted in advance; they depend on the relative values of the individual involved. In some cases, there is uncertainty regarding whether the project will produce a minimally successful product; and in others, whether if successful in its own terms, the product will ultimately be used.

These abnormal uncertainties tend to create general tension and frustration among members as well as involve strategic managerial decisions about which there may be substantive disagreements. The tension and frustration may contribute interpersonal friction and may overdetermine the conflict centering on managerial decisions, making the decisional conflicts more difficult to resolve.

In addition, any major uncertainty about the ultimate success of the project undermines the project teams' ability to obtain high commitment from project members (as well as cooperation from the functional departments). Low commitment or ambivalent commitment from a project member leads to conflict between himself and the project manager and between himself and the more committed project members.

Interpersonal rapport and group cohesiveness within the project team enable team members to provide each other with the social and emotional support to sustain the tension created by high uncertainty and to directly express their irritations with each other rather than displace them onto substantive conflicts.

Turning to the interagency setting, tasks are also characterized by high uncertainty, not only because of technical questions inherent in the task, but also because of political and psychological factors in the context as well. As pointed out above, by participating in an interagency increases its political and bureaucratic exposure. The additional visibility of the agency's personnel, procedures, and program goals increases the risk of criticism, followed by either closer supervision of the agency's activities or reduced appropriations. The effect is to inhibit participation and encourage caution in the project management team.

There were many psychological strikes against each of the interagency projects studied. In each case many project participants were basically opposed to the interagency program, in particular to the Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program as conceived; the idea that a new long-term paper for Country X was needed; and to the reduction in overseas personnel. Other participants who did favor the program to which they were assigned were disappointed that their own top management was giving it too little support or expected that in any event support for the program would gradually or abruptly subside. For example, in the NCPP, which lacked adequate fund commitment from the

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<sup>6</sup>Steiner and Ryan (19), p. 4.

outset, participants feared that even less support would be forthcoming once the centers were operative. The concept of "exercise" was frequently used to refer to the interagency programs. In fact, interagency ventures are very susceptible to cutback and withdrawal of support. Apparently, this was especially true during the Johnson Administration, when priority would shift very rapidly from one set of concerns and programs to another. In politically sensitive areas, there is a tendency to make commitments that are more apparent than real. The rate of failures which results from launching many programs but not sustaining their support has tended to discourage participants for making the commitment and investing the energy that is required for successful project management.

The CASP cycle was plagued by doubts about whether the CASPs would have any impact on actual plans, but certain features did add helpful elements of certainty—participation by each country mission was mandatory and in turn field missions were assured that their documents would be read by their superiors at the assistant secretary level.

#### Ambiguity and Fluidity of Structure

Project organizations typically have relatively less routinized methods and less explicitly defined job jurisdictions:

One project manager observed, for example, that one of his subordinates may have most of his authority and interest in design. He will also have other interests and perhaps some authority in other areas, such as launch, quality control, or production. It is meaningless, he said, to try to define precisely areas of authority in order to prevent gaps or overlaps. For example, when his chief of design finds a relatively free moment and there are important problems in quality control, he is expected to help those directly responsible to solve them. This project manager further observed: "If you rigidly define authority, all you do is leave holes in the organization through which the big problems fall. However, if you go along with a 'Gaussian' distribution of authority, the overlaps insure that all problems are considered by someone."<sup>7</sup>

The ambiguity in task definition roles, and responsibilities provide more opportunity for disagreement about the structure. However, to the extent that the project manager is simultaneously able to promote a problem orientation rather than a concern for a structure, the jurisdictional issues either don't arise or are more readily resolved when they do arise. Again, the temporary life of the particular organization tends to reduce the saliency of the jurisdictional issues.

In the interagency setting, role ambiguity had mixed effects. Ambiguity was a problem in the NCPP, especially regarding the roles of HUD, OEO, and BOB. The CASP cycle and the planning group similarly were hindered by ambiguities of roles and responsibilities. In all three cases, the problem orientation—which could turn role ambiguity into an asset—generally did not develop. On the other hand, role and procedural ambiguity were exploited in the interest of interagency initiatives by the Ambassador in Operation

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

Topsy. The Ambassador was clear about this objective and knew how to maneuver in bureaucratic politics. For example, the Ambassador bypassed the middle levels of the bureaucracies where he could expect to encounter opposition and he preserved the initiative and control over timing and definition of the issue.

#### Interdependence and Rewards

The above aspects of project management contain relatively high conflict potential and in some cases special opportunities for the constructive management of conflict. The factor discussed here and the two which follow represent collaborative features embodied in project management.

Assuming participants accept the goals of the project, the task relationships among project members is marked by high interdependence; and the need for collaboration is usually immediate and/or highly apparent to each member. In industrial settings project goals are seldom questioned. But as we observed earlier, in interagency projects participants frequently are not strongly committed to the goals of the project; therefore recognition of interdependence is not as readily forthcoming.

It is generally true in both industrial and interagency settings that relationships within the project team are not undermined by a competitive system of personal rewards. Salary increases and promotions are still handled by the functional department thus removing a type of competitive incentive which typically interferes with collaboration among members of face-to-face work groups.

#### Whole Products

Project management organizations have some advantages over strictly functional organizations in promoting members' identification and ego involvement with the work.

One project manager reported that people in the functional areas frequently told him about things that were likely to happen in their areas before the event. Loyalties of people in the functional areas working for this man seemed to be stronger toward him than toward their supervisors in the functional areas. In this case one of the reasons seemed to be that the project manager helped the functional people to solve their problems. He worked intimately and carefully with them. He was able to install in them a strong sense of participation in a successful, important, and dramatic program. He provided a mechanism by which they could be identified with the object they worked on. They could see the results of their work. He said: "The functional (operating) divisions do not satisfy their needs. Identification with our program does."<sup>8</sup>

Project teams are symbolized by a product, rather than an aspect of a product. A project member has a larger piece of a particular product,

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

rather than smaller pieces of several products. Project membership makes a person aware of the many dissimilar specialists who have similar identification with that product. The bonds of immediate work-group relationships are complementary and focus on the project goals rather than consensual and oriented to similarities of individual backgrounds or skills. Thus, the project organization makes it possible to get greater commitment to goals and reduces the opportunity for the natural rivalry among members of the same professional specialty. It does not, however, decrease the rivalry which may exist among different professional specialties (e.g., mechanical and civil engineers).

These positive tendencies appear to operate in both industrial and interagency project teams, although somewhat stronger in the former. Many participants in the interagency projects studied found the purposes of the project more appealing than the narrower objectives of their own agency. readily identified with the project team and its product and were stimulated by the interaction with specialists from other agencies. However, value differences cut down somewhat the potential for the identification with the goals of the interagency effort and ego involvement in the work. Thus, the fraction who get turned on by the unique mission of project is small, substantially smaller than would be the case of aerospace projects.

#### Territoriality

Whereas traditional interdepartmental liaison functions are conducted between the work spaces (by memo and phone) or in one of the departmental work spaces, project management teams usually occupy a unique work space, at least in industry. The separate work area for project teams not only promotes communication and social interdependence, but also gives the organization a spatial identity with which the member can identify himself. Although the co-location of team members of interagency projects may not be a common practice, where it does occur, it should have the same integrative effects.

#### Problem-Solving Orientation

An important issue in project management is how differences are handled, both within the team and with the functional departments. Do participants typically become involved in a struggle for dominance-submission outcomes? Do they directly confront their differences in a problem-solving effort for integrative solutions? Do they tend toward compromise of their differences? Do they try to avoid or smooth over their real differences?

Many aspects of project management either encourage or depend upon problem solving. Fundamentally the very organizing theme of project management is problem-oriented rather than specialty oriented. The effectiveness of project management depends upon a readiness to confront openly and attempt to integrate differing views. The task uncertainties and intensity of work pressures make interpersonal support based on openness more important; participants need to be able to confront, deliberate, and share feelings.

Unfortunately, many aspects of interagency projects, including those already mentioned, discourage problem confrontation and especially encourage avoidance.

First, it should be noted that because of the shared authority between the project management teams and the functional departments, there is relatively little use of dominant-submission approaches. The approach was sometimes tried early in the interagency projects studied, but was soon abandoned as creating more problems than it solved. Rather than submit to a decision clearly contrary to its interests, a party would appeal to the higher echelons; and as we pointed out earlier, costs are associated with winning as well as losing such appeals. This leaves as possibilities, compromise, avoidance, and problem confrontation.

Factors that are favorable to direct problem confrontation include:

- (a) the lack of competition among members for rewards (promotions, salaries);
- (b) common commitment to the goals, when that condition obtains;
- (c) easy access to other team members when the project has its own office space;
- (d) the temporary nature of work associations which minimizes the long-run consequences of open disagreements that don't happen to get worked through.

Factors that encourage avoidance include:

- (a) participants often naturally procrastinate and avoid those issues which raise the personal salience of their dual loyalties;
- (b) representatives of agencies avoid the issues which involve their value differences because of the discomfort created by such fundamental impasses;
- (c) the visibility and political vulnerability associated with projects provide an incentive to avoid taking a position;
- (d) doubt about the probable success of the project discourages the investment of energy;
- (e) fundamental doubt about the wisdom of the interagency project leads some members to subvert the effort by avoidance tactics, such as nit-picking the issues, using representatives with no authority, and hiding behind red tape.

Where avoidance is not possible, compromise tends to be the backup method of handling differences.

#### Summary

Several of the sources of conflict which accompany project management methods in industry are present "in spades" in interagency projects:

(1) Conflict in priority that result from an authority gap are frequent and difficult because the project managers have been housed in one of the sister agencies.

(2) Conflicting loyalties that are inherent in dual membership are heightened by stereotypes and value differences and by the group formation problems of a newly formed temporary system.

(3) The emotional and substantive differences that accompany uncertainties regarding successful completion of the task are exacerbated by the perceived political risks and a low expectation of success.

(4) Conflict about responsibility that may arise under an ambiguous and fluid role structure are loaded because of their potential political repercussions.

Of the forces toward collaboration and opportunities for conflict resolution that accompany project management in industry, some, but not all, are less potent in the case of interagency projects. In particular:

- (1) The possibility in temporary systems for resolving differences flexibly and without concern for precedent is nullified by the inability to get federal agencies to relax their respective rules.
- (2) The relative ease with which personnel can be shifted in and out of a temporary system does increase the interagency project's ability to break up relationships that have tended to create impasses.
- (3) Project team membership does increase an agency official's awareness of the need for collaboration, the existence of a common work space does facilitate a common identification with the project and the project goal does have a unifying effect; but the last tendency is limited by virtue of the fundamental differences in values that may be aroused by the inter-agency program.



## CHAPTER 11

## INTERUNIT DYNAMICS AND THIRD PARTY ROLES IN

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Manifest or potential interagency conflict is a fact of bureaucratic life! In Chapter 10 we identified many factors that promote conflict, avoidance, and integration in the interagency communities. Now our interest shifts to process dynamics and the constructive management of conflict in particular. The greatest attention is focused on third party roles and interventions which are designed to assist (or have the effect of assisting) in the resolution or control of interagency conflict. Many of the interventions include tactics intended to overcome avoidance tendencies. Also different intervention strategies have different implications for the type of integration which results.

The theory of interunit interactions and third-party interventions set forth in Chapter 2 proposed certain key conceptualizations of the phenomenon and several sets of propositions.

Interunit Dynamics

The initial conceptualization distinguished four interaction processes: two instrumental processes, task cooperation (e.g., problem solving) and task competition (e.g., bargaining, and two expressive processes, identity reinforcement and identity conflict. A set of propositions postulated the effect of each process on the other three processes. The conceptualization provided useful heuristics for understanding interagency dynamics in many of the cases, a point we have already attempted to demonstrate in the end of chapter summaries. Similarly these analytic summaries noted the anecdotal support provided for specific propositions.

In brief, we would emphasize the following confirmation of the theory: Total organizations in the interagency community and their representatives are concerned about the image they project to others with whom they deal. Thus, joint ventures between these relatively separate organizations are likely to raise identity concerns on which the organizations often have the latitude to act. As expected, these identity concerns do complicate interorganizational decision making. Where the preferred identities of two organizations are compatible, the parties are more likely to be able to fully exploit the collaborative potential which inheres in their respective goals and resource pools. Where preferred identities are in conflict the parties are not only less effective at problem solving but also their bargaining is more likely to result in miscalculations, impasses, and default outcomes.

The cases tended to support the above concepts and propositions, but they also reveled an important omission in the theory of interunit interactions.

It was assumed that even if participants to a joint decision-making situation are preoccupied with identity issues, they nevertheless are also engaged in either problem solving, bargaining, or both. The empirical observations, however, indicate that they are often engaged in neither. The author was struck by the amount of behavior of agency participants that is not directed toward either problem solving or bargaining over their respective preferences regarding the substantive issues that divide them, but rather is devoted to defeating the interagency process and making the outcome as ambiguous or innocuous as possible. To recall a few examples:

In the CASP cycles, some U.S. missions submitted planning documents that were merely "stapling jobs," i.e., each of the agencies in this mission had contributed a piece with little or no integration or synthesis of the assessments, objectives, plans or programs for that country. They had succeeded in avoiding engagement.

\* \* \*

In the working group of the Policy Planning Council, the reluctance to engage issues and willingness to defeat the interagency process was manifested in many ways, including the uneven patterns of attendance and participation in discussions, the reluctance to sharpen interagency differences, and the refusal to consider a range of contingencies in the planning process.

\* \* \*

In the NCPP, the under secretaries of the HUD, OEO, HEW and Labor had agreed to parcel out primary responsibility for the fourteen pilot centers before the Bureau of the Budget intervened with the White House to preserve the interagency conception of the program. In effect the agencies had reached a compromise that would enable them to avoid each other in the future.

In the above illustrations, agencies were working on the dimension of independence-interdependence, and were responding to those forces identified in Figure 10.2 which promote autonomy strivings. Our earlier discussion examined the nature of the interdependent potential, noting that failure to collaborate involved only opportunity costs, not regression from the status quo. These explain why avoidance was a viable alternative to problem solving and bargaining. We also examined the specific incentives and costs which discouraged involvement. These explain why avoidance is frequently the preferred alternative in interagency relations.

Especially pertinent to the theoretical framework of interunit interactions is that at the heart of much of the independence maneuvering is the desire to preserve a particular identity or status--even at the cost of on-going collaborative potential. For example, unfavorable stereotypes of the other agency lead to avoidance behavior as if contact would contaminate one's own identity. Incongruity between the status of personnel representing the two agencies or between the agencies themselves has a similar effect. Another strain derives from contact when one agency fears that its program's identity will be blurred. Also where two agencies have similar programs, contact increases the feeling of rivalry. Parties who have contact still will not necessarily engage each other over the issues in conflict. Often agency heads don't want to confront their substantive differences. Perhaps both participants to a conflict feel they will lose something they already have. Controversy often brings unwanted visibility and control. Agencies often prefer to continue their own programs, even if they are contradictory to other programs. Live and let live!

Even when an official knows an issue must be confronted and resolved, he may prefer to surface the issue outside interagency committees--typically in one or a series of bilateral discussions--in order to keep better control of the timing and framing of the issue and in order to minimize complicating the issue with the vested interests of other agencies. Similar tactical considerations often underlie a preference by some participants not to have an issue explored by a subordinate group before it is submitted to the inter-agency group which probably will have to eventually resolve it.

An example where an official avoided an issue in mechanisms designed to surface it was provided by the Ambassador to Brazil when he chose not to propose a review of the size of the U.S. mission to Brazil during the CASP cycle in late spring of 1967, but rather to propose a 50% reduction via an ad hoc procedure in early summer.

In the face of these many inhibiting factors, the stimulus for any engagement must be strong, sustained and coupled with some monitoring procedure if engagement is to result. This characteristic of interagency relations will be taken into account in our treatment of third-party interventions.

### Third Parties

The theoretical framework distinguished among five types of third-party "intervention:" (1) the reduction or elimination of the conflict potential in a situation; (2) the direct resolution of a substantive issue in dispute; (3) the facilitation of the parties' efforts to manage a particular conflict; (4) the facilitation of a change in the parties' conflict-prone relationship via task activities; and, (5) the parties' modification of their relationship via diagnostic insight and working through procedures. Each intervention strategy is based on one of the relationships postulated to exist among the four sub-processes.

Several "role attributes" of the third party were proposed as factors which could have important influence on the effectiveness of the third parties'

attempts to help in the constructive management of conflict. These attributes included: (1) professional expertise regarding social processes; (2) power over fate of principals; (3) control over procedures and the immediate setting in which interunit discussion occur; (4) knowledge about the substance of issues and about the principals to the conflict; and (5) degree of neutrality or balance in orientation towards the substantive outcomes and the conflicting principals.

The propositional aspect of the third party theory specified which role attributes would tend to facilitate which intervention strategy. Anecdotal evidence bearing on the validity of these propositions will be presented in the discussion below. The discussion of process dynamics and third parties is organized to determine how each of the five intervention strategies was illustrated in the interagency efforts studied.

### Reducing Conflict Potential

Chapter 9 inventoried the field of forces which impinged upon interagency relations. Many of these competitive incentives (regarding values, status, and funds) and stimuli for autonomy drives (e.g., to preserve agency initiative and distinct agency identities) are largely inherent in any pluralistic bureaucratic system—that is, they could not be designed completely out of foreign affairs or urban affairs. Still, these incentives and stimuli can be modified somewhat; and superordinate goals and other pressures to collaborate can be enhanced. Even more amenable to alteration are sources of tension (inequities and status incongruity), overload conditions (where conceptual limitations and red tape are factors), and barriers to synchronization (such as different geographic boundaries of regions and disparities in status of agency representatives). Thus, there are many factors which both create conflict potential and are subject to the control of relatively high level superior and the architects of bureaucratic organization.

Many of the specific areas where these types of changes are both possible and especially desirable have been treated in Chapter 10. The purpose here is merely to identify this relatively basic type of third-party conflict management intervention.

### Resolving Substantive Issues

#### Higher Executives

Interagency conflict often signals the need for superiors to become involved and contribute to the substance of the decision. A disputed point between managers may indicate that finely balanced judgments are involved, and that only a manager with broader understanding can make the judgments. Alternately, the issue may reflect a basic value conflict that should be resolved at a level where those responsible for the organization's missions may participate. Therefore it is necessary to ensure timely exposure of the disagreement to authoritative interagency decision makers and perhaps ultimately to the crossover executive, i.e., the executive to whom both agencies report. The case studies provided a few illustrations.

BOB escalated several key conflicts to the White House when the NCPP was floundering badly. In particular, the under secretaries had decided to resolve their conflicts over control, program emphasis, and funding, by parceling out prime responsibility for the 14 centers to the four agencies. The White House reversed this resolution and forced decisions on each issue thereby preserving the interdependent character of the program. To gain support for Operation Topsy, the Ambassador of Brazil went right to the top of the departmental hierarchies. Similarly, when OEM-BOB reached a snag in its dealings with HUD, it would involve the Deputy Director of BOB to personally confront the Under Secretary of HUD and reach some resolution of the disagreement.

By taking an active role on substantive issues, executives offset the tendency for subordinates either to persist in or to compromise disagreements when the final decision should be made at a higher level. This pattern also satisfies a higher manager's need to be informed. However, sometimes third-party judgments in win-lose struggles simply relieve the parties from the struggle itself, but not from the problems of defeat. Losers tend to feel an imposed decision was unfair, to suspect the third party, and to doubt his competence or understanding of the problem. If the party that is upheld also was responsible for exposing the issue to the higher executive, the "loser" will resent the initiating party.

#### Coordinating Units

Sometimes a unit which is assigned the specific task of coordinating other units employs its own analysis to influence decisions. The Policy Planning Council is such a unit. Its task is to develop long-term policy papers, typically for one country or region at a time. It doesn't have other program responsibilities. Its procedure relies upon interagency working groups, but the chairman has very high influence over the substance of the paper submitted to the field and ultimately to the top U.S. policy makers. It should be noted that the interagency group contains representatives from each of the several units of the State Department who have an interest in the country in question--e.g., the desk officer, Intelligence and Research Officer, and one or more staff members from functional bureaus. Their participation frees the chairman from representing a parochial State Department view.

In the development of the paper for Country X, the chairman ultimately chose the language which interpreted and assessed trends in X that had been the subject of interagency disagreement and phrased the plans where there had been both soft-line and hard-line advocates.

#### Participation of a Peer Department

Still another potential source of third-party influence on the substance of an interunit issue is a peer department which is not essentially involved. This is one of the purposes for many of the interagency groups studied: The interdepartmental Regional Group in the CASP cycle, the Federal Regional Teams and the Washington Interdepartmental Review Committee in the NCPP, the under secretaries group with respect to the regional councils. In every case,

some decisions which might otherwise have been handled on a bilateral basis between the two agencies with the greatest interest, were subtly or obviously influenced by the participants present from peer agencies. However, the amount of this type of influence considering the potential opportunities is small. There is a strong tendency to stay on the sidelines during discussions of issues in which one's interest is negligible and two other's is major.

Third party peer departments sometimes force resolution of decisions which might otherwise represent an impasse. Whether or not this represents third-party intervention in the sense of this chapter depends on whether the third unit is interested primarily in helping to resolve the conflict or in entering into a coalition for the purpose of exchanging favors and influence.

### Managing Manifest Conflict

The type of third-party intervention described immediately above is concerned with the substance of the issues in dispute. In contrast, the interventions to help manage manifest conflict act on the interaction processes of conflict.

Our discussion of third-party interventions that have their effect through managing the interaction processes will first describe those that influence the patterns of interparty contact; second, those that ensure that the parties engage each other over the significant conflict; third, those that facilitate productive engagement in problem solving and bargaining.

### Influencing Gross Patterns of Contact

It is often possible to improve conflict management processes by affecting the gross pattern of interunit contact and coordination efforts. Some of these control techniques are available to the parties through their own initiative as well as at the initiative of a third party.

Sometimes control involves constraining interunit contact. In the NCPP management system, the WIRC chairman tried to channel as much interagency contact as possible through a few liaison personnel representing each department in order to minimize the likelihood of unnecessary controversy. The OEM played a third party role vis-à-vis field-Washington relations by trying to "keep the under secretaries off the backs of the regional councils."

In other instances, collaboration can be improved between departments by promoting interunit contacts. An obvious and basic way is to increase physical proximity. As an example, the Ambassador of the mission to Brazil reorganized office space and dispersed many sections of the AID mission in order to bring together physically the following and other combinations: Assistant Director of AID, Economic Counselor of the State Department, and the Treasury Attaché; the AID capital development office and the Commerce Attaché; etc. These changes facilitated functional coordination.

Superiors who are aware of conflict between subordinates can ensure that they confront their conflict, with a view toward resolving it. The supervisor simply adds his own pressure for continued work on the conflict to that already inherent in the issues. Or, supervisors also can play a more positive, social-emotional role in facilitating the resolution of conflict among subordinate units.

The Ambassador to Brazil and his staff assistant had leadership patterns which combined to promote increased interunit contact and coordination. The Ambassador let it be known that he had firm expectations that the separate agencies in the mission would find ways to coordinate their affairs and collaborate where appropriate. He asked for information about friction and was willing to exercise the force at his command to bring reluctant agencies into interagency contact. His staff assistant complemented the Ambassador's harsh approach by encouraging, arranging, facilitating, and reinforcing interagency contacts and instances of coordination. He did use the influence of the Ambassador, but subtly enough that his interpersonal and organizational skills at facilitation were the more apparent part of his approach. Thus, the moderately high power third party who punished instances of non-cooperation was complemented by the low power, socially skillful third party who could facilitate the necessary interunit contacts. Both were more effective because their third-party roles were combined and coordinated.

#### Surfacing Issues

Our case studies illustrate a wide variety of third party tactics for surfacing and sharpening disagreements. (Many of the same tactics are used for sharpening both instrumental and expressive conflict.)

1. Gatekeeping. The Office of the Chief of Mission in Brazil endeavored to review all relevant outgoing communications from agency chiefs to their Washington superiors. It was a standard requirement that the Ambassador's staff read all messages carried by one type of media, but the Ambassador asked to have a chance to review any communication with possible interagency repercussions before it was sent. This enabled him to "hit issues on the head" at an early stage.

2. Organizational access. Another related tactic of the Ambassador was to insist upon access to the junior officers of all agencies which comprised the mission. This enabled him to identify and confront some of the interagency issues which would not have been reflected in any outgoing communication.

3. Monitors. The Bureau of the Budget was not a peer participant to the NCPP, rather had some general expediting mission. The BOB officials appointed as city watchers—one to each project city—identified and reported those factors blocking progress in the field project teams. These barriers included interagency, intergovernmental, and field-Washington conflicts. The higher level BOB representative, in turn, could surface these issues in the Washington Interagency Review Committee or if necessary escalate them to the White House.

4. Interviewing and reporting. A third party--typically in a consultant capacity--can investigate, identify, and analyze the substantive differences between interagency participants. He may or may not make recommendations, and if he does they may be made to the participants themselves or to a higher executive. The interagency task force employed in Operation Topsy interviewed agency chiefs and their subordinates to identify which conflicts between the Ambassador's general position (favoring a 50% cut in all agencies) and the various agencies' positions were especially deserving of further bargaining and problem solving.

5. Joint drafting and review of documents. The CASP cycle required (but did not achieve) a document that was drafted collaboratively in the overseas mission, and that was subsequently reviewed by interagency groups in Washington. The Policy Planning Council involved similar steps. The requirement to develop NCPP guidelines for the field was so effective in surfacing (but not resolving) the issues between HUD and OEO that jointly approved guidelines could not be issued until about 8 months into the program. In both the CASP cycle and the NCPP, the effect of the collaborative task was weakened by factors in addition to deliberate avoidance tactics: the time allowed was inadequate. The new groups (such as IRG and WIRC) experienced an inevitable timidity and tentativeness during their initial phases.

6. Dialogue techniques. Face-to-face meetings provide an opportunity for a third party to personally try to smoke out the issues among participants. The chairman of the policy planning group probed with questions and later used a devil's advocacy strategy, hoping to elicit differential responses to the extreme positions he posed. His conflict sharpening techniques are instructive even if, as we observed earlier, participants were surprisingly impervious to many of them. In the CASP cycle, many ambassadors were encouraged to attend the IRG meetings when their country's paper was reviewed. This sometimes facilitated the surfacing of differences.

7. Analytic techniques. Collaborative deliberations and drafting responsibilities leading to interagency documents can be more effective in sharpening conflict when they involve certain features which promote intellectual rigor. The chairman of the policy planning group employed techniques which required each participant to assign priority weightings to each of a number of U.S. objectives vis-à-vis Country X. These involved assignments of differential weightings to the desirability of the objectives and to the extent to which the realization of these objectives can be influenced by U.S. policies and programs. The quantitative aspects of this exercise have great potential for revealing differences among participants.

The format of the CASP paper required assessments of threats and opportunities, assignment of priorities to various U.S. objectives vis-à-vis the country in question, the presentation of policies and programs planned, including the dollars involved. The format facilitated the identification of differences between agencies. For example, the political and intelligence sections of the mission had primary responsibilities for assessments of threats and opportunities, whereas AID represented the majority of programs planned. Inconsistencies between these two sections usually reflected differences not surfaced and confronted.



### Promoting Effective Problem Solving and Bargaining

Assuming that the parties are in contact with each other and that the conflict issues have been surfaced, effective conflict management focuses on the joint decision-making processes and the expressive processes that have an immediate impact on them.

Chapter 10 described the nature of two contrasting types of joint decision making, each appropriate depending upon the inherent nature of the issues. To the extent that issues can only be resolved through compromise or dominance-submission, then bargaining is required. To the extent that issues are amenable to some creative integrative solution, then problem solving is appropriate. The skilled third party can help the parties recognize how much compromise will ultimately be necessary, and ascertain the integrative potential in the issue or combination of issues.

Recognizing how these two decision processes tend to be mutually interfering and how identity conflict between participants tends to undermine problem solving, the third party can work to minimize these effects. These techniques can be implemented at the initiative of third parties as well as the principals themselves.

The mutually interfering character of bargaining and problem solving cannot be eliminated, but can be minimized by certain methods. One method for minimizing the dilemmas is to separate or differentiate the two types of decision processes as much as possible--by agenda, by people, by ground rule, by time and by space. Another is to bargain over respective shares in advance of the problem solving to increase the joint gain. Still another technique is to develop norms and relations governing the interaction systems which discourage both parties from using certain bargaining tactics most disruptive of problem solving.

How can one minimize the extent to which conditions of identity conflict interfere with effective problem solving? (a) By clearly delineating the scope of decision making early in the process, thereby clarifying the degree of risk to identity that is at stake in the joint decision process. (b) By selecting representatives who are least likely to trigger the identity conflict, in particular, persons who are relatively acceptable to the other participants and relatively accepting of them.

The first BOB representative on the NCPP interagency committee had played an active role in developing the neighborhood center concept advanced by the Bureau. His presumptive and abrasive manner in taking substantive positions on NCPP policy was very irritating to other members who became as resistant to him as he was adamant in his views. When he was replaced by a person whose interpersonal style was more in keeping with the Bureau's traditional image, compromise and problem solving was not only facilitated, but also the Bureau representative was reportedly more influential.

(c) By exploring problems in off-the-record sessions where organizational identities are deliberately deemphasized.

The membership of the Rio "think tank" cut across the many foreign affairs agencies. The group met evenings in a member's home, informally but regularly. To participate in the think tank one had to agree to shed his agency identity during the discussions. This alleviated any individual from the necessity to take bargaining postures when substantive issues of a conflict nature were discussed; and to work to establish or maintain his agency's preferred identity. Thus, the individual was free to engage in exploratory problem-oriented discussions within the more manageable constraints of meeting his own personal identity needs.

(d) By confronting identity conflict as an agenda separate from the decision-making problem. Separating identity conflict--both its expression and attempts to resolve it--from the decision process per se is often advisable. Not that one can completely separate them. However, if the identity conflict is acknowledged and dealt with explicitly the representative whose personal identity or whose group identity is frustrated has less need to work on the identity issues under the guise of decision-making deliberations. Frequently the process of direct confrontation of the identity issues enables the parties to work through to some partial resolution or to manage their behavior to make the identity conflict less salient. If this process is not well managed, there is a risk that the conflict will be escalated.

In their work with the chairman of the Policy Planning Council's working group, the consultants enabled the chairman to ventilate and gain insight into his frustrations that derived in part from the identity conflict in the group.

The techniques for minimizing the effect of identity conflict on bargaining--when that is mutually desirable--include several of those discussed for ameliorating its effect on problem solving, namely, careful selection of representatives, clear delineation of scope of decision making and off-the-record sessions.

The techniques for offsetting the tendency for bargaining to promote identity competition include depersonalizing the process as much as possible, giving it as little publicity as possible and developing norms which constrain both parties from the more alienating forms of bargaining tactics.

#### Facilitating a More Integrative Relationship via Task Leadership

Now, rather than analyzing interventions which act either on the substance or process of conflict, we treat task leadership interventions which move an interagency community toward a new equilibrium--a relationship in

which there is less emotional conflict and avoidance and a generally improved capacity to resolve differences. In each study a face-to-face group was actually or potentially a major instrument for achieving the interagency results that were sought. In some cases leadership promoted the integrative development of the interagency group; and in other cases it did not.

### Integrated Systems and Their Implications for Conflict Management

Before we explore the interventions of leaders and consultants that promote the development of integrated systems, we need to clarify some of the characteristics of integrated systems which enable them to manage conflict more constructively. Many of these characteristics have similar implications for conflict management. Therefore to avoid redundancy, these implications are shown in Table 11.1 rather than discussed in connection with the description of each attribute.

1. Open network. A Chairman of an interagency effort may attempt to coordinate the participating agency officials by a series of bilateral or trilateral transactions, rarely if ever convening the groups and then only to formalize decisions already made. This facilitates a certain kind of maneuverability for the chairman and gives him relatively great amounts of the interagency influence in the community. In its extreme form the structure of the community involved in the interagency effort is what has been referred to as a "star network." The chairman has a monopoly on the gatekeeping junction. Each participant, such as B in Figure 11.1a, is directly related only to the chairman. In the "wheel network" each participant has relations with some small subset of other participants--in Figure 11.1b, B is related to C and F as well as A, the chairman.

The chairman may choose to create an "open network," (depicted in Figure 11.1c) in which all members are related to all others. Convening all members and keeping them in sustained contact does not necessarily mean that they will form an integrated system. Integration depends upon other interventions such as those which will be discussed shortly. Also, creating an open network has certain risks for the chairman as well as potential gains. The chairman may lose his centrality in the community, he may be confronted by coalitions that nullify his influence, and the interagency effort may suffer. The potential gains are partly of the same coin: If other integrative attributes develop in the group, the chairman will increase his own absolute influence (even if his influence relative to others decreases, he may be a central character in a more powerful interagency instrument) and the interagency effort may be promoted. We proceed now to review other integrative attributes.

2. Shared knowledge. One of the most likely results of an open network is mutual education among agencies--about the facts and factors salient to each agency, about the unique missions each agency is pursuing, and about common and/or superordinate goals. Increased data allows for more identification of the integrative potential and more problem solving.

3. Personal familiarity and mutual respect. Interagency transactions occur between agency representatives. Interpersonal familiarity and especially

Table 11.1 - Observed Tendencies in the Effect of Selected Attributes  
of a Community on its Capacities for Managing Conflict

Integrative Attributes of an Interagency Community	Implication for conflict and conflict management: Observed tendencies				Encourages consideration of (larger, smaller) set of interrelated issues
	Identity Conflicts	Policy and other instru- mental con- flicts	Surfacing of significant conflicts	Resolution of conflicts	
1. Open network	increase	increase	Can promote or inhibit	Can facilitate or interfere	larger
2. Shared knowledge about					
a. facts-political, military	---	decreases	promotes	facilitates	larger
b. agencies' unique missions	increases or reduces	increases or reduces	promotes	facilitates	larger
c. common and superordinate goals	reduces	reduces	promotes	facilitates	larger
3. Personal familiarity and mutual respect	reduces	---	promotes	facilitates	---
4. Mutual help norms	---	---	---	facilitates	---
5. Identification with group and common entity (e.g., country)	reduces	reduces	---	facilitates	larger
6. Commitment to superordinate goals	reduces	reduces	promotes	facilitates	larger

Figure 11

Figure 11. a  
Star Network

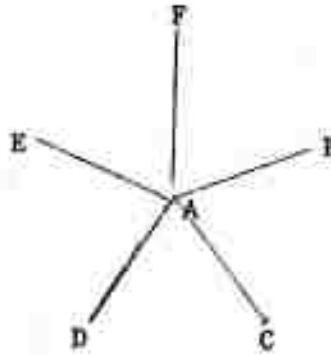


Figure 11. b  
Wheel Network

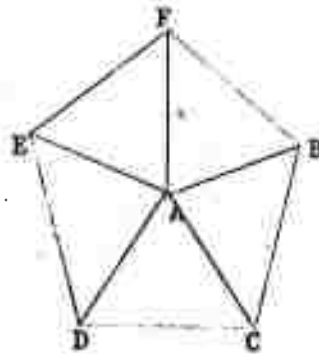
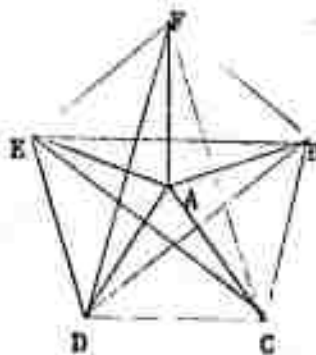


Figure 11. c  
Open Network



friendships facilitate information exchange and responsiveness. Respect for the competence of a representative of another agency may accompany familiarity whether or not friendship bonds develop. Mutual respect is often an outcome of and in turn promotes candid interchanges.

4. Mutual help norms. As participants in an open network structure deepen their knowledge of each other's worlds and develop interpersonal bonds of friendship and/or respect, group norms often develop which prescribe that members should help each other whenever possible.

5. Identification with the group and the common entity with which it is associated. One's functional specialties are shared with his own agency colleagues, but typically his geographic interests are not shared widely within his agency. The interagency groups studied usually were associated with some geographic territory (e.g., Brazil, Country X, a U.S. region or city) or a concept (neighborhood center, regional council). The concentration of many persons who share an interest within a country, region or concept tends to enhance their identification with that entity. The common identification in turn strengthens group cohesion and reinforces many of the integrative attributes listed above.

6. Commitment to superordinate goods. Increased commitment to superordinate goals is a key attribute to an integrated system, which may precede or follow the other attributes of group development.

#### Task Leaderships, Integrated and Non-integrated Groups

The country director who chaired the innovative Brazil Interdependent Group, did not have the power to compel membership or attendance; he relied on his own skill in managing the sessions to make discussion productive and valuable to individual members. Many meetings featured informal presentations by persons with unique knowledge about the country, followed by round-table discussions of the issues raised. His method of handling meetings included relating himself to members directly and personally; urging continuity in the personnel representing an agency, differentiating one-time observers from regular members; encouraging, accepting, and helping develop views which differed from his own; and not keeping minutes on the meetings.

By the way he managed the sessions he gradually achieved certain psychological and informational states that in turn improved the problem-solving and conflict resolution capacity of this interagency network. Common exposure of the agency representatives to experts and to each other, and their own mutual education and information exchange activities, decreased the likelihood of future interagency conflict based on differences in perceived facts and tended to break down many negative intergroup stereotypes that existed about Peace Corps, Military, CIA, and State, etc. The development of personal relationships among agency representatives increased their tendency to check with each other for specific advice and information. Encouragement of dissent and challenge in the absence of compelling policy or action decisions was effective in setting a group norm of sharpening, accepting, and exploring differences—a norm which could carry over into solving specific problems. A corollary group norm was one of identifying the additional information which the group would need if it were to choose between the alternative views.

The agency representatives not only achieved a better understanding from State Department official of overall goals for U.S. relations with the country in question but also became more committed to them by virtue of a sense of identification with the interagency group. This enhanced sense of membership in the group and commitment to superordinate goals increased a member's personal discomfort whenever his agency's action ignored the interests of other agencies.

In the overseas mission studied, an important experimental device for achieving a higher and more creative level of integration of the many strands of foreign affairs activities was referred to as the "think tank." It was an informal weekly meeting of a group drawn from many agencies to think imaginatively about problems of concern to the foreign affairs community as a whole. The ambassador's staff assistant had played a key role in initiating the idea. The group also included a second staff assistant to the ambassador, the deputy director of AID, an assistant director of AID, two military men, and a second level official from USIS. A ground rule for members was that they were to address the problems rather than represent their respective agencies' viewpoints. Generally this group included bright young men below the country team level. Apparently group meetings not only weakened stereotypes but also increased members' confidence in the complementary competencies of their respective agencies. At the time of the study, they had identified some new potential areas of collaboration which they intended to recommend pursuing.

The examples of the country director in Washington and the staff assistant in the overseas mission both illustrate a third party whose relationship to the other persons involved slightly greater organizational power, somewhat higher status, and higher access to information. Their interventions centered on task activities which did not require immediate action outside the group, but were nevertheless immediately gratifying to members. Their critical intervention strategy was to build a social system and their process tactics ensured that the system had norms and other attributes which facilitated the productive use of differenced.

The NCPP experience contained a few impressive examples of efforts to build collaboration. Most notable was the effort along this line by the first chairman of the Washington Interagency Review Committee. He reported directly to the Secretary of HUD and also had access to the White House when additional clout was needed in order to resolve an interagency issue. However, he didn't try to rely primarily upon either formal authority or the clout he could bring to bear. He tried to avoid imposing the views of the lead agency; he endeavored to have the program perceived as an interagency rather than a HUD program; he worked diligently to build interpersonal relations among team members by trying to stabilize representation and using formal encounters to build rapport; he tried to enforce the norm that they would speak with one voice in their contacts with Federal Regional Team members; he manifested unusual patience and attended to group processes, apparently with considerable skill. With one possible exception, the members of this WIRC, the composition of which remained stable from spring to the end of the year in 1967, maintained their commitment to the NCPP and to each other.

Interestingly, it can be argued that the WIRC chairman took too much care to develop this Washington governing committee into a strong integrative group. First, the adherence to a unanimity rule in all decisions, and the chairman's patient search for the basis for voluntary agreement of members severely delayed the issuance of authoritative guidelines to the field, adversely affecting the quality of the Neighborhood Service Program proposals submitted and antagonizing the local group enlisted to the program. Second, the preoccupation with its own internal interagency relations, reduced WIRC's sensitivity to its relationship with the Federal Regional Teams, which was an equally important dimension of the management system. Third, as representatives became more highly committed to the WIRC and the NCPP they increased their distance from their respective agencies to the point that a few representatives lost important influence within their own agencies. They did not seem to cope effectively with the "traitor" treatment which involves loss of status and rejection of any representative who makes concessions to another institution.

In contrast with the BIG and the think tank, where differences could be sharpened and then tolerated, WIRC was required to make decisions—in areas where there was controversy and when delay was costly. Thus, the strategy of the WIRC chairman to build a social system via the development of group norms and group relationships was manifestly similar to those of the organizations BIG and the think tank, but its success is both more striking because it was pursued under much less favorable circumstances, and more questionable because it had disadvantages as well as advantages.

The Washington task force serving the Ambassador in Operation Topsy also developed into a cohesive and strong group. We have little evidence of the way the leadership from within this group promoted the integrative development of the group, other than the working chairman's self report that he served as the "mother hen" during the initial period when the group was coalescing. Instead, we can only identify the great need for cohesion and some of the facilitating conditions. These task force members were in a situation highly laden with conflict. Each member was subject to opposing expectations from the Ambassador, from members of the Rio mission, and from middle level bureaucrats in the agencies with which he was identified. Hence, a cohesive group offered the members emotional warmth and cognitive support in situations marked by hostility and conflicting opinions. Group development was promoted by the fact that they were several thousand miles from their families, thrown together on a full-time basis for several weeks, resided in the same hotel and worked very long hours. (The need for and conditions favorable to group cohesion are illustrative of factors which a chairman may either influence, articulate or make salient in timely ways.)

The think tank, WIRC, BIG and the task force in Operation Topsy were offered as groups with high member commitment and other integrative characteristics. Contrasting examples are provided by the working group of the Policy Planning Council, the IRG, and the country team during Operation Topsy. The way the leaders of these latter groups handled many aspects of process failed to promote the development of interagency groups with strong member commitment. What did they do? What could they have done differently?



We review and elaborate many issues of group process or structure which generally were well handled in the successfully integrated groups and frequently were not adequately resolved in the other groups, where they served as barriers to integrative development.

Establishing Personal Identities. The BIG chairman related to members in a direct and personal way; the WIRC chairman used informal encounters to break the bland impersonality typical of bureaucratic transactions. Contrast is provided by the policy planning group. Because the chairman of the working group was very much oriented to the intellectual elements of the task, he overlooked the need for each member to establish an identity--there was not even an effort to ensure that each person was known by name and agency for several meetings. Beyond enabling simple identification, the chairman could have set aside time to allow each person to state the amount and type of experience he had had with the affairs of Country X. Each member might have been encouraged to name the particular aspects of the overall tasks in which he had a special interest, the type of responsibility he had in and to his agency, and the type of participation in the working group which his superiors expected of him. By expressing these more task relevant aspects of his identity, he would also be able to communicate his image of himself in this situation; e.g., he could use this opportunity to represent himself as "intelligent, aloof, reactive," or as "modest, eager to help, and dependent upon others for direction," or whatever. Mutual understanding of such preferred images is essential to group development.

Emphasizing Group Membership: Continuity, Size, Isolation. The chairman of WIRC and BIG both made a major point of ensuring continuity in agency representation. The WIRC chairman insisted upon full attendance or the meeting wasn't held. The BIG chairman carefully differentiated one-time observers from regular members. The assignment of the Topsy task force isolated its personnel as a group, separating them physically from their families and home offices and psychologically from members of the U.S. mission in Rio. Both continuity and isolation appeared to promote integration via their effect of increasing the salience of group membership.

A process barrier to integration of the IRG was the size of attendance at meetings devoted to the review of CASPs. Although its regular membership was less than 10 persons, the number of persons with a compelling reason to attend any given review added another 20 persons. In effect, IRG was meeting in a fish bowl--not surprisingly with an inhibiting effect. Both the size of meetings and the non-member status of the majority present detracted from psychological membership.

Enabling Participation as Individuals as well as Representatives. The think tank required that the member leave his agency hat at the door and participate strictly as an individual. The BIG chairman elicited both levels of participation. By contrast, in the policy planning effort, the group climate never reached the point where this flexibility was possible.

The members of interagency groups typically were assigned to the group as representatives of their respective agencies. It is usually essential to the process that each member contribute his specialized insights and represent his agency's official views. However, if the process is to challenge existing assumptions and to develop and thoroughly explore policy alternatives, members must feel free to enter the process as knowledgeable, interested individuals

temporarily free of the constraints of representing their agency. They must feel free to express their own individual doubts, contribute untested ideas, and react candidly to the views of others.

One feels free to express his own rather than his agency's views when (a) he is certain other members can make a corresponding differentiation in their perceptions of his participation, and (b) he has confidence that others will not subsequently use any discrepancies between his own and his agency's views in a way embarrassing to him. Even if the member assumes that his ideas or views which become clarified as a part of discussion are not necessarily at variance with his agency's the more he regards himself as strictly an agency representative, the more pressure he will feel to clear them with his superiors in advance, depressing the quality of the interchange.

The chairman can promote this type of role flexibility of members by stressing its importance and allowing members to make clear to him and to each other the facets which limit their flexibility. Again, the more interpersonal trust which exists in the group, the more flexible members will be.

Providing Appropriate Task Structure. BIG meetings featured informal discussions and round-table discussions. No minutes were kept. The majority of the BIG members believed the current degree of structure in the group was optimum. If the chairman had followed through with his earlier plans for evolving the group into a more formal action-taking instrument, the increase in formality and structure would have created new process conflicts for many members. The think tank was highly fluid in form, appropriate to its exploratory and creative task.

A strategic aspect of the chairman's style of leading a group is the extent to which he first makes-explicit and adheres to some agenda, providing some more or less systematic procedure. Structure coordinates expectations about the task and the roles of members. Therefore contributes to efficiency. However, open-endedness to the process enhances the likelihood of free expression and creative interchange. If there is too little structure, member performance suffers from ambiguity, permissiveness and uncertainty about the task. If there is too much structure, members may resent the control and constraint. What is "too much" or "too little" structure varies depending in part upon the objectives of the group. The optimum amount of structure is a function of the nature of the objectives of the group.

In the policy planning group, the chairman provided relatively low structure because he wanted the process to be fluid, responsive and spontaneous. He wanted members not only to contribute content to the discussion, but also actively to influence the direction of the discussion. These preferences of the chairman were related to the fact that his objectives included innovation in the policy planning process. But because members placed more emphasis on efficiency and less on innovation, they preferred a relatively high degree of structure. These differences were never worked through, but probably could have been, strengthening member involvement and commitment.

Structure is one aspect of the working process that is especially amenable to direct discussion within the group--even without a high degree of interpersonal trust. The chairman can ask the group, "Do you feel we have enough common understanding about our methods and procedure?" He can pose this at the beginning of a meeting as a way of ensuring enough understanding to allow good discussion, or at the end as part of critiquing the group's methods.

In the IRG review of CASPs the executive chairman failed to meet members' expectations regarding the structure for discussions and formal records of the transactions. The chairman relied on his own notes which were not reproduced and distributed to members. This contributed to confusion and some suspicion, both of which retarded the development of the group.

Striving for Consensus. We have discussed how the WIRC chairman pursued consensus, underplaying the role of power to form decision, in the interest of strengthening the interagency group. The policy planning group provides a contrast.

The chairman of the policy planning group had an interest in using non-traditional methods for stimulating discussion and for presenting ideas. He could have expected many members to differ with him--at least initially--about the appropriateness of comprehensive, standard category schemes for arraying objectives and the quantitative methods for weighing objectives and other elements of the paper. These differences were a factor in slowing down the development of the group.

The chairman's authority presumably made it appropriate for him to require members to participate in whatever methodology he presented. However, the usefulness of the method depended greatly on the cooperation and enthusiasm with which members participated. Members' participation in the method in turn was affected by their role in the decision to use the methods.

The quantitative exercises were potentially very helpful in identifying differing views among members, but at least initially they were not too productive. Probably the members did not adequately understand the chairman's purposes for using the methods; in any event, there was no thorough, candid discussion of the appropriateness of the methods. As a result members had little invested in the exercise--and they left it completely up to the chairman to utilize the rating data and demonstrate the usefulness of the methods. Eventually, these methods were used by key members of the group in a way satisfactory to the chairman. If the chairman had allowed for genuine participative decision making in the use of those exercises, the group might have persuaded him to lower his expectations. However, we believe they would have made the methods used more effective for this particular group's work and an even better test of the value of the methods for the chairman's future reference.

Sensitivity in Critical Evaluation. Many of the groups studied did not involve individual participant contributions which required evaluation by the group as a whole or by the chairman. However, other groups involved drafting papers which were then discussed and redrafted. When something one has written is criticized, his ego is bruised. The more seriously a

person has taken his writing task--which one would want him to do--the more difficult it is for that person to avoid resentment toward those who treat it lightly, criticize it, or redraft the paper in a different way. The resentment can generate alienation and reduced willingness to take responsibility for future writing tasks.

There was evidence that some negative feelings were generated by this issue in the policy planning group we observed. One member commented with a twinge of resentment that his paper had been written by the chairman. On the same date, two other members mentioned some irritation that the chairman had not yet responded to their respective papers nor had scheduled a meeting for the group to discuss them. The papers subsequently presented and discussed ranged widely in quality. Some were very good. Their authors were congratulated. Others were poor in quality or omitted some important aspect of the problem; as a result the chairman instructed the authors to rewrite the papers. The reactions of authors ranged from dismay to annoyance.

Inevitably, some papers are going to be found wanting and they must be criticized and redrafted, which is well known to all authors of drafts. One of the costs of negative reactions of group members can be reduced effectiveness, thus efforts to diminish such reactions are worthwhile. The more clearly the chairman can state in advance what area he wants covered, what level of detail he requires, and what format he prefers, the less severe and less likely is criticism and redrafting. If the chairman cannot provide detailed guidance, he can offer to review the draft in a general way as a step prior to its presentation to the group. His private and preliminary criticism is much easier for the author to take without becoming defensive.

Not only does the handling of the sensitive matter of evaluation of member contribution affect group integration, but also the climate within the group greatly conditions the reactions of members to critical evaluation of their work. If there is basic mutual respect, trust, and a high commitment to group goals, critical evaluation of a person's work is more likely to be offered in a constructive vein and to be received non-defensively. This will be especially true if the group has an explicit practice of critiques in its own group meetings. In this case, the chairman's methods are open to criticism and suggestions, and he can set an example of accepting and utilizing critical evaluation.

Sharing Credit for Output. An important aspect of the leadership style of the WIRC chairman was that he avoided any tendency to treat the interagency group as an instrument of his own agency. Both he and the chairman of BIG and Topsy task force stressed that any group products were interagency products.

Articulating External Threats. We noted this possible third-party intervention in connection with the Topsy task force, where the potential emotional warmth and cognitive support available in a cohesive group was an incentive for group development. To some extent this dynamic may have been operating in the WIRC group, prompting the chairman to develop an understanding that the WIRC would present a united front to other groups involved with the NCPP.

Synthesizing Political Influence and Interagency Integration. The Ambassador of Brazil and his staff assistant personally were third parties in achieving coordination between two agencies, but they accomplished this outside the context of the country team as a group. It was not a part of the Ambassador's strategy to develop a strong integrative group, and none had developed there. Moreover, the Ambassador's handling of Operation Topsy had at least one type of disintegrating effect on the relations among agencies in the mission. Operation Topsy was well designed to ensure that some sizeable reduction in agency staff would result (and some types of integration would be automatically achieved), but it also further fragmented the mission in an attitudinal sense.

### Integrative Development via Sociotherapy

A third party may help principals perceive and move toward a new equilibrium in their relationship via diagnostic insight and working through antagonistic feelings. We refer to both internal consultants such as OEM and externally-based behavioral science consultants. The consultant can assist in the effective handling of any of the issues of process and structure discussed above which can constrain or promote the integrative development of the group, such as those involving personal identification processes and task structure, etc. Interventions can take a large variety of forms, only some of which are illustrated by those who occupied consultant roles in the cases reported in this volume.

### Providing Diagnostic Insight

By "diagnosis" here we include the recommended actions implied by a systematic understanding of the situation. In almost every one of the cases reported here, the author provided some form of diagnostic feedback to participants regarding the state of their particular interagency social system and the integrative or disintegrative consequences of certain contextual factors, procedures or leadership styles.<sup>1</sup> In fact, this diagnostic role was usually the rationale for the author's involvement as a consultant. A few cases are illustrative.

In working with the chairman of the policy planning group, diagnostic observations on many process issues were made on a meeting-by-meeting basis and the feedback was almost immediately available to the chairman. Beyond that, the consultants served as a sounding board for the chairman, reacting to his action plans on the basis of their own understanding of the group.

In the case of BIG, the report on which Chapter 4 was based was submitted to the BIG chairman and members. It surfaced the significant differences in the aspirations, indeed preferences, for the role of the group--differences that as a result were adjusted with less risk of disappointment and therefore with less risk that the functions which all participants valued would be lost.

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<sup>1</sup>Earlier we reported how consultants can be used to surface issues as a part of managing current conflicts. Here this data gathering and analysis is viewed as it relates to the longer term development of the groups.

Similarly, at the end of the author's field investigations of Operation Topsy, he submitted a report to the Ambassador of Brazil analyzing the latter's strategies and tactics including ways in which they were defeating some of the Ambassador's own goals for Topsy. The Ambassador reportedly took the diagnosis and some advice to heart; the next week he met with key members of the U.S. mission in an effort to implement the ideas.

In BIG and Topsy the diagnostic focus was on leadership and the integrative effects of the leader's initiatives. In two other cases, the author's reports dealt with larger systems: (1) the CASP planning cycle for the entire interagency community concerned with Latin America; and (2) the NCPP management system for projects in 14 separate cities, each with an interagency and intergovernmental character. Hence, the diagnosis in these cases focused more attention on the effects of structural and procedural factors on leadership. In these cases, a greater time lag would occur before the insight and action implications could be put to direct application.

Acting as an internal consultant, OEM's interventions with the Atlanta regional directors included interviewing and diagnostic feedback. Then, OEM supplied the under secretaries group with a more generalized diagnosis of interagency problems at the regional level of their respective bureaucracies.

#### Providing Support and Opportunity to Ventilate Feelings

The integrative development of a community is affected by the way the inevitable tensions are handled. There is an abundance of experience which indicates that expression of true feelings which are heard, understood and accepted by others (even by persons who are not the target of the feelings) helps the person get perspective on his feelings and manage the feelings more productively. Feelings which one can't express to anyone are more likely to become more potent, more diffuse, and distorted. In two of our cases, consultants played an active and purposive role in helping to manage this tension.

The chairman of the policy planning group frequently experienced disappointment and exasperation with the slow progress of the group and with the response of other members. Given their weak commitment to the working group, some members might have been driven into further passivity if the chairman had expressed more of his negative feelings in the group than he did. The consultants' meetings with the chairman of the policy planning group allowed the chairman to ventilate some of his feelings. Although the consultants often disagreed with his actions in the group, they were on the whole a source of collegial support for him in his experimental venture to innovate in a planning procedure.

One purpose of the Airlie House Conference was to unfreeze the regional directors' attitudes of antagonism toward each other, skepticism and anger toward Washington officials, and suspicion toward the OEM. In designing the conference OEM arranged for participants who could trigger these feelings, planned a schedule that permitted these feelings to be thoroughly ventilated and still have time for constructive forward-oriented work, and created a permissive climate in which feelings could be expressed. Not that the conference was managed without flaw in this respect. The under secretaries,

assistant secretaries and Model Cities committee provided a strong stimulus for the expression of negative feelings toward Washington, and then the Washington officials expressed their own brand of distrust and scorn toward the field. The stimulus was too strong as the interchanges tended to exacerbate rather than merely ventilate the feelings. Still on the whole, the conference allowed for the expression of feelings which set the stage both for collaborative work during the conference and attitude change over the longer run.

The above interventions were within consultant-client relationships involving frequent contact. The two rounds of interview in the U.S. mission to Brazil were one-time encounters with a primary purpose to gather data. Still, for many interviewees this was a chance to get some things off their chests. Changes in posture and language and/or self-reports at the conclusion of an interview would indicate that a person had vented some important resentments, was relieved and at least temporarily freer for having done so. The therapeutic by-products of the behavioral science interviewing derived in part from the fact that it was non-evaluative of content and involved attempts to convey understanding of the feelings and other personal meanings which the content had for the interviewees.

#### Facilitating Productive Encounters and Critiques

The diagnostic and cathartic interventions cited above usually involved individual interviewing. In the few instances which involved interaction settings, they also could be viewed as a part of these consultant interventions.

In the consultation with the policy planning group the consultants served primarily as coaches to the chairman and made a limited number of comments in the group, e.g., to sharpen the issue. In the future we would recommend more active effort on the part of the consultant and chairman to encourage and assist the group in critiquing its own functioning. The consultant could play a key role in helping the chairman and the members develop a social contract--i.e., converge their basic expectations about the working group's goals and methods. He could be especially active in the group critiques, both offering his own advice and eliciting members' views on the salient issues of group structure or process.

Chapter 3 concluded with a recommendation that behavioral scientists conduct team building sessions in the overseas mission to accelerate the acquaintance process in a situation of high personnel turnover and to ensure a broader interpersonal network across agency boundaries.

The Airlie House Conference which launched the regional councils is illustrative of what was being recommended for the overseas mission. The OEM officials in their consultant-coordinator roles actively promoted team-building, pointing out the consequence of inaction by regional officials, making contingent offers of help, reinforcing group identity and modeling candor themselves.

### Role Attributes and Interventions

A third party may be related to the principals as an organizational superior, consultant, separate coordinating unit, or peer. These four role relationships differ in many respects, including the magnitude and types of power available to the third party, the degree of impartiality likely to be attributed to the third party and the degree of relevant knowledge possessed by the third party. We can summarize how these and other aspects of the role relationships of a third party govern which of the four types of interventions are available to him.

(1) The organizational superior is best illustrated by the official of the White House (Presidential Assistant) who convened the agency heads to resolve the conflict over contributions or funds to the NCPP. (2) The second type of third party—a strictly peer-participant—was rarely illustrated in the investigations of interagency relations. When it did occur, it was reflected in informal acts, not officially in behalf of the agency which the participant represented. For example, member participants to BIG, to the Federal Regional Teams in the NCPP and to the Airlie House Conference would occasionally try to smooth over, mediate or synthesize a disagreement between the officials from two other agencies. (3) The closest approximation to the separate coordinating unit was BOB's role in the NCPP, although this role also contained elements of one or more other types. The task force used in Operation Topsy also approximates this type of third party—it was intermediate among agency officials in the mission, and also between each of these officials and the Ambassador. (4) Both internal and external consultants played third-party roles in the working group of the Policy Planning Council.

An equally large number of the agencies' units or officials who performed the third-party functions analyzed in this volume are best characterized as a combination of two or more of these four ideal types. Certain State Department officials have been delegated supervisory and coordinative functions over foreign affairs—namely, the ambassador in relation to the country team, the assistant secretary in relation to the Interdepartmental Regional Group and the under secretary in relation to the Senior Interdepartmental Group. Still, because of limited effective power vis-à-vis such departments as Defense, AID, and the CIA, these State officials must consider their position as a mixture of the superior, peer and coordinative types. Compared with the ambassador, the chairman of BIG and the policy planning group had even less interagency authority, making them more clearly mixtures of the peer and coordinative types. Similarly the Convenor Order provided HUD such nominal support for the lead role that they were effectively a peer participant in the NCPP with special coordinating responsibilities. The combination of consultant-coordinating units is illustrated by the Office of Executive Management/BOB in its efforts to establish councils of the regional directors of HUD, OEO, HEW and Labor.



## CHAPTER 12

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Given the scope and urgency of the problems facing the Federal government in foreign affairs and now especially in the cities of this country, it is easy to demonstrate that the United States bureaucracy as currently constituted is horribly inadequate to these tasks. The studies reported in Part II represented seven specific localized, innovative efforts to chip away at the interagency fragmentation which represents one dimension of the organizational bottleneck.

We shall review some of the ways in which the seven cases provide diversity and other ways in which they tend to reinforce the same themes.

The seven integrative efforts were diverse in their basic form or structure. In two of the cases the efforts were continuous ones: we examined coordination under ambassadorial leadership in the overseas mission and under the leadership of the country director at the desk level of foreign affairs agencies in Washington.

In two other cases we examined formal planning exercises of an interagency nature--one, a program planning cycle covering an entire region; and the other, an effort by a temporary working group to develop a long term policy for one country.

Two cases focussed on change programs--in one case, an ambassador's attempts to drastically reduce the size of the U.S. mission, targeting 50% cuts in the staffs of major agencies which comprise the U.S. mission; in the other, the Bureau of Budget's attempts to establish councils of the regional directors of four agencies in the urban affairs community. Both change efforts were intended to result in an organization structure and climate which would enable better interagency coordination in policy making, program design and program implementation, including liaison with host country government in foreign affairs and/or with state and local officials in urban affairs.

In another case--the NCPP--we examined the management system for a program that combined the resources of four urban agencies. This effort involved negotiating program goals and resource contributions, developing guidelines and establishing other program implementation activities.

The types of processes and skills which figure significantly in these seven integrative efforts also varied. The dynamics of the face-to-face group of interagency representatives was important in many cases, but not all. In a few cases we focused attention on leadership style. Similarly in a few cases we took notice of third party interventions of outside consultants. Several cases, especially the two change efforts, clearly involved bureaucratic political maneuvers.

The seven cases illustrated a variety of successes and failures:

- (1) In the overseas mission the Ambassador, complemented by his aide, was far more vigorous than usual in forcing pairs of agencies to work together, but the unrealized integrative potential was even more impressive.
- (2) The innovative group of desk officers in Washington led by the Country Director of the State Department (BIC) was a striking success to date, but was more limited to how it could evolve than its creator had earlier expected.
- (3) The policy planning working group was able to produce a document which probably met the requirements for which the procedure had been initiated originally. However, the chairman failed to develop the group into an innovative or cooperative instrument for producing the paper and learning about procedure. Moreover, the frustrating interagency experience probably had the effect of discouraging participants about future interagency efforts.
- (4) The formal purposes of the ground breaking cycle of inter-agency program planning (CASP) were achieved in modest proportions (and it was modestly productive in its positive secondary effects), but more impressive still were opportunities inherent in the exercise which for various reasons were not exploited.
- (5) The Ambassador's strategy of change in the overseas mission (Topsy) appeared well designed to realize in substantial measure the most operational of his objectives--sharp reductions in the size of agency staffs--but had been partly self-defeating in terms of the more subtle objective of increasing day-to-day collaboration among agency staffs in the mission.
- (6) The Neighborhood Centers Pilot Program was characterized by delays in, and disappointments in the quality of, various aspects of the program--the guidelines issued to field, citizen involvement at the local level, program proposals submitted to Washington, and funding commitments by participating agencies. It had been tremendously consuming of bureaucratic man hours and energy considering the observable results in the fourteen city projects at the time of the field investigation. Still, it had achieved an impressive array of secondary objectives--including learning that could be applied to the larger Model Cities Program which was following on the heels of the NCPP.

(7) The first few stages of the Budget Bureau project to establish regional councils among the urban affairs agencies had produced some positive results, but the future success of the project, including councils that could function effectively, was by no means assured.

In other respects, the similarities among the cases were at least as striking as the differences. Whatever form they took, the interagency efforts encountered many of the same contextual forces affecting integration. Similarly, while the specific products of these efforts were diverse in character--planning documents, new council, etc.--and while the primary goals were achieved in various degrees of success and failure, the efforts resulted in many of the same outcomes--usually as by-products or representing secondary goals. These consequences included mutual education, interpersonal bonds established across agency boundaries and learnings and skills which left the community somewhat more integrated; thereby, enhancing its capacities for undertaking the next interagency efforts. These similarities lead to several conclusions.

(1) Two-dimensional conceptualization of interagency relationship: Conflict and integration are frequently used to define the relevant spectrum along which the relationship is evaluated. The achievement of integration in this setting at least must be conceptualized as two-dimensional--movement along two dimensions. The study of agencies underscores the usefulness of viewing avoidance-engagement and conflict-cooperation as two separate dimensions. Integration then is explicitly viewed as moving away from either or both of the conflictful or avoidance modalities and toward cooperative engagement.

Consistent with this conceptual development were our empirical observations that integrative initiatives frequently floundered because of avoidance tendencies and that integrative efforts often succeeded because they were designed to overcome these tendencies.

(2) Feedback loops--implicitly a bootstrap strategy of integrating the bureaucratic communities: The feedback effect of integrative efforts is a significant phenomenon. Even where the primary goal of a particular integrative effort was not achieved in any significant degree, the interagency project, exercise or council frequently produced changes in skills, knowledge, relationships, attitudes and values that would facilitate future integrative initiatives. Thus, at the conceptual level, this confirmed the value of a systems-like model with feedback loops; and at the practical level, this indicated that bureaucrats should explicitly evaluate interagency efforts in these terms as well as in terms of their primary goals.

(3) Behavioral skill--an essential ingredient in the integrative process: Despite the almost pervasive effect of many constraints in the interagency environment, many individuals were able to fashion effective strategies for integrative development. Frequently their effectiveness was explicable in terms of the way they handled joint decision making and agency identification processes and/or the way they played third party roles in the management of conflict.

(4) Structural modifications--urgently needed: The feedback effect sometimes included procedural or structural adjustments as well as attitude changes. This is a necessary outcome because a more favorable bureaucratic climate and greater behavioral skills can make only modest progress unless there are some accompanying structural changes. Such changes would include alterations in such things as the authority of lead agencies and the regional boundaries for urban affairs agencies.

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACORD-- Action for Organizational Development  
AID - U.S. Agency for International Development  
ARA - Department of State/Bureau of Inter-American Affairs  
BIG - Brazil Interdepartmental Group  
BOB - Bureau of the Budget  
CAA - Community Action Agency in OEO programs  
CAMPS - Coordinated Area Manpower Planning System  
CASP - Country Analysis and Strategy Papers, developed on a country-by-country basis for the Latin American region  
CEP - Concentrated Employment Program  
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency  
CSC - Civil Service Commission  
CUP - Critical Urban Problems  
DA/FAS - Department of Agriculture/service with responsibility for food sales and other agricultural concessions  
DA/IADS - Department of Agriculture/International Agriculture Development Service  
DOD/DIA - Department of Defense/Defense Intelligence Agency in the Office of the Secretary of Defense  
DOD/ISA - Department of Defense/International Security Analysis in the Office of the Secretary of Defense  
DOD/JCS - Department of Defense/Joint Chiefs of Staff  
DGL - Department of Labor  
EDA - Economic Development Administration  
EIB - Export-Import Bank  
FAPS - Foreign Affairs Programming System--a version of a PPBS being developed by a staff group in the State Department  
FEB - Federal Executive Board  
FRT - Federal Regional Team in the NCPP  
GAO - Government Accounting Office  
HEW - Department of Health, Education, and Welfare  
HUD - Department of Housing and Urban Development  
INR - Department of State/Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
IRG - Interdepartmental Regional Group, composed of regional assistant secretaries of foreign affairs agencies  
JATF - Joint Administrative Task Force composed of assistant secretaries for administration from HUD, HEW, OEO, and Labor  
MAAG - Military Assistance Advisory Group  
NCPP - Neighborhood Center Pilot Program  
NPP - National Policy Paper, developed under the auspices of the Policy Planning Council  
NSP - Neighborhood Services Program

OE - Office of Education  
OEM - Office of Executive Management in the Bureau of the Budget  
OEO - Office of Economic Opportunity  
OTF - Oakland Task Force  
OTFR - Oakland Task Force Report  
PC - Peace Corps  
PHS - Public Health Service  
PPBS - Planning, Programming and Budgeting System  
SBA - Small Business Administration  
SIG - Senior Interdepartmental Group, composed of under secretaries of  
foreign affairs agencies  
S/P - Policy Planning Council  
USIA - U.S. Information Agency  
USIS - U.S. Information Service  
WIRC - Washington Interagency Review Committee in the NCPP

207 - OEO's Neighborhood Corporation Program which was incorporated into  
the NCPP

703 - HUD's Neighborhood Facility Program which was incorporated into  
the NCPP

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